

1 Timothy 2:1-15

The Effect of the Gospel on the Gathered Church

I will extol you, my God and King,
and bless your name forever and ever.

Every day I will bless you
and praise your name forever and ever.

Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised,
and his greatness is unsearchable.

One generation shall commend your works to
another, and shall declare your mighty acts.

On the glorious splendor of your majesty,
and on your wondrous works, I will meditate.

They shall speak of the might of your awesome
deeds, and I will declare your greatness.

They shall pour forth the fame of your abundant
goodness and shall sing aloud of your
righteousness.

The Lord is gracious and merciful
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

The Lord is good to all,
and his mercy is over all that he has made.

All your works shall give thanks to you, O Lord,
and all your saints shall bless you!

They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom
and tell of your power,

to make known to the children of man your
mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor
of your kingdom.

Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and your dominion endures
throughout all generations.

**[The Lord is faithful in all his words
and kind in all his works.]**

The Lord upholds all who are falling
and raises up all who are bowed down.

The eyes of all look to you,
and you give them their food in due season.

You open your hand;
you satisfy the desire of every living thing.

**The Lord is righteous in all his ways
and kind in all his works.**

The Lord is near to all who call on him,
to all who call on him in truth.

He fulfills the desire of those who fear him;
he also hears their cry and saves them.

The Lord preserves all who love him,
but all the wicked he will destroy.

My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord,
and let all flesh bless his holy name
forever and ever.

Psalm 145

Review / Introduction

The Apostle Paul had an interesting problem on his hands. He had spent three years with the church he started in Ephesus, living with them and instructing them night and day, imparting to them the whole counsel of God. After this he wrote them a definitive letter reminding them of The Gospel and instructing them in how they were to conduct themselves.

Now, just a few short years later, just as he had predicted, some people in the church had started teaching a false message, straying from the simple message of God's Mercy and Grace toward us through Christ that Paul taught. They went beyond this message into speculation and myths, guessing about things that God hasn't told us. Some were laying down rules to follow as a way of obtaining favor with God. They were likely teaching these things in Jesus' name and using Paul's name to back it up, and some may not have realized that they were straying from Paul's teaching.

Paul advocates "Sound Doctrine" and holds that scripture, rightly taught, always lines up with what he calls "The Gospel of the Glory of the Blessed God." Sound doctrine always gives Jesus all the credit for doing what we could never do without Him doing it for us: living a life worthy of God, and paying the debt we owe God for our sin against Him. Paul reminds Timothy of this:

"I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus."

1 Timothy 1:12-14

Do you see this? Though he was a blasphemer, persecutor of the church, and opponent of God, Jesus Christ looked at him and judged him FAITHFUL! He received MERCY for acting without faith and knowledge of truth. By grace, Jesus poured out faith and love to Paul that Paul did not have! We are finally able to love ONLY because Jesus loved us!

"The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen."

1 Timothy 1:15-17

Paul was appointed by God to steward (protect and maintain) this message of Mercy and Grace. And Paul is now passing this off to Timothy, reminding him to stick to God's Word, not to stray into his opinion or guesses about things that aren't written, and to always remember that scripture is ultimately about this Gospel of God's Glory, shown through his Grace, and that the goal of this message is "love that issues from a pure heart, good conscience, and sincere faith." He warns that if you fail to keep this in view, you will shipwreck your faith. Paul writes this letter to Timothy to remind him of these things and to teach him what it looks like for people to live in light of this truth.

First of all, Pray!

The primary effect this message has on the church is prayer.

vs 1-4 -

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Paul urges that, in light of this message of mercy and grace that we pray all kinds of prayers for all kinds of people. This message is an "equal opportunity" message! Whatever gender, race, or social status we are to pray for them all.

He gives a specific example, as a sub-point, of those with authority and influence, and I will say simply that we are to pray *for* them! Not that God would thwart them, but that we might have peace and order in which to conduct our life and mission. Even those who actively *oppose* Christ are acting, as Paul did, ignorantly in unbelief.

We are told to pray for all people, according to God's desire for them to understand this truth:

vs 5-6a - For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

There is only one God, for all people. We tend to have in the back (or sometimes front) of our minds that different cultures have different Gods. We think that different people have their way of connecting with the generic "god/being/power/force/thingy" and that's fine for them, but this simply is not true. God, the God, the Only True God, loves them, died for them, and wants everyone to know

this. This is the message we've been entrusted with. A weighty charge! And so we are to pray, pray, pray.

Paul goes on to explain how we ought to conduct ourselves when we meet together to pray.

Pray without Anger

vs 8 - I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling;

Men, you are to pray.

How many men are in here tonight?

All of you are to pray. Lead in prayer. Initiate the praying. Coordinate prayer times. Lead the charge in praying. If there is some sort of ministry going on somewhere, get a group together and lay down cover fire for them by praying. This is your God-ordained, manly duty. Set the pace here. Set the tone here.

Lift up holy hands. Don't just go through the motions. Don't just feebly mumble half-hearted, unfelt, half-thought through prayer. Reach up with your hands to heaven, where God is, and cry out to him! But lift up *holy* hands... Pray without anger or quarreling.

Jesus said something that Mark recorded in his gospel that stops me dead in my tracks every time it comes to mind.

“And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.” Mark 11:25

And again in Matthew's gospel:

“So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.” Matthew 5:23-24

Just before this Jesus says that remaining angry is the same as murder! So who do you need to forgive right now? Who do you have a long-standing war with. Who are you just done with and refuse to deal with any longer? Who is in this place toward you?

Be a man! Go get it right. RIGHT NOW! Suck it up, grit your teeth, allow injustice to be done to you and go get it right. You CANNOT fulfill your God-given manly duty without doing this.

Tonight is the night! It has to end! If it doesn't, you will never grow, you will never lead, and you will

never be a man. Go. The manliest of the two of you needs to go first. Our goal is love that issues from a pure heart, good conscience, and sincere faith. Sometimes, for men, we think this takes an octagon or boxing ring and some bloodshed. But remember that the blood has already been shed. Christ forgave you, you MUST forgive.

I want to let this sit for a moment. Who do you need to forgive? What quarrel do you need to drop such that you can with an honest heart walk up to him, shake his hand, and look him in the eye? What is stopping you?

The Beauty of Good Works

And now to the women...

vs 9-10 - likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness--with good works.

Sisters, those of you who profess to worship God, hear me: This is not a fashion show. Your goal should not be to attract attention to yourself by the way you dress and carry yourself. You know how easy it is to turn heads by what you wear (or don't wear). If this is your goal when you carefully pick your outfit for Thursday night or Sunday morning, you need to repent. This is not about your comfort or preference. This is about others around you. Dress yourself in a way that will help minimize distraction for another praying man or woman. Do not draw people's attention away from Christ to yourself.

Instead, God directs you to "good works." This is what you ought to be noticed for. There are *thousands of possibilities!* Jump in with both feet! There is much to be done and we need you! Paul gives only one exception to this.

Four Extremely Unpopular Words

vs 11-12 - 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.

One of my favorite commenters explains this passage this way: "God's intention is that Christian women would be well-informed theologians, and to do so they must first lean to respect the male pastors whom God has appointed to instruct them." Let me explain.

In order to get at the meaning of these verses, and perhaps diffuse the improvised explosive devices some of you are aiming at my head, it will be helpful if we define some terms.

First, notice that Paul commands that women should be let to learn theology! Scriptural and other historical evidence exists that women were generally well educated, particularly in Greek and Roman cultures such as Ephesus, but in the Jewish culture (that this church was greatly influenced by) women were NOT taught theology. Their husbands or fathers were. Paul is advancing an idea here that values women *very* highly and thus sets the tone for the rest of the command.

Quiet: Does not mean silence, it means calm, content, receptive, and non-argumentative. Same word used for men AND women above in verse 2! The general idea is to not concern yourself with things outside the scope of your responsibility.

Submissiveness: Subordination. This extremely unpopular word has a Military use that makes a helpful comparison. It was used to describe an ordered army or a fleet drawn up in battle array, ready to function together as a unit. This subordination has a practical aspect in that it creates a greater effectiveness in their working together. This submissiveness is required of the *entire* church in relationship to God-ordained authority which we'll talk about in a moment.

Teach: Not in the "transfer of knowledge" sense of teaching that one could take or leave as they please. Teaching in this sense (the Biblical sense), is authoritative. The Gospel is not advice but news. Advice can be taken or left. News must be acted upon. A disciple submits himself or herself to their masters not for *IN*formation, but *FORMATION ITSELF*. Ultimately, the teaching described in scripture, and especially with which Paul is concerned here, is God's teaching. The "Stewardship from God that is by faith" (1 Tim 1:4), "Sound doctrine in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God" (1 Tim 1:11). It is not our message, our thoughts, our opinions, our ideas, it is God's thoughts, God's message, God's idea, with which we are concerned here! This concept of teaching is directly tied to the exercise of authority.

Exercise Authority over a man: As teaching, in the scriptural sense is inherently authoritative, this thought is related to the teaching thought. Authority in this sense is direction of the group, through scripture rightly taught, with individual correction for those who are part of the group and not following this direction. One important note is that this authority does not come from position, status, age, or title. Biblical authority is God's revealed Word. We are simply stewards of

this authority. That is what this letter is all about. So, when we talk about submitting to authority, we mean the authority of God's word, handled by qualified men. And we will be talking more about this next week.

To sum up: women (as well as the entire church!) Are to remain submissive to the exercised authority of God's word, and quiet (that is, receptive) in regard to the public teaching of this word. Only men are called to the frightful task of directing the church according to God's word, and only certain men at that. We will get into that next week.

Objections

1. Cultural (women were uneducated then, educated now)
2. Situational (specific heresy they were espousing at that point)
3. Other scriptural examples of female leadership (the handful of authoritative women...)

All of these are answered by Paul in one fell swoop, because the reason he gives for this is so trans-cultural, so trans-situational, and so universal as to make these objections impossible.

The Key is Genesis

vs 13-14 - For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.

These verses do NOT say that women are more easily deceived than men. Paul is taking us back to Genesis. Let's go there.

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." Genesis 2:15-18

God created the man and gave him responsibility for caring for the creation, which he could not possibly do on his own, nor was he intended to. God declares (not realizes!) that it is *not good* for man to be alone, and gives man the beautiful gift of a perfectly suited helper for him. God sets this in order, man as leader woman as helper to man, and calls it *very good*, all *prior to the fall*. This order of man as leader and woman as helper was not a result of sin. It was not a concession of God. It was his plan and purpose all along. We call this His providence.

He did not make a woman for a man because man was lonely, but because he was incomplete and in some areas, completely helpless. Man could not fulfill God's command without woman! "Go forth, be fruitful, and multiply!"

In the same way, our church would simply not function without several extremely important women. We're talking EPIC FAIL without them. The church would literally collapse. The pastors' wives, Elaine Roys, Heidi Pool, My Wife (i'm not bragging, it's why I married her!), Christie Johnson, Holly Anderson, Neva, and on and on, I'm sorry if I left your name out, trust me that I am thinking of you. Oh, how we could use more of these women! If you are offended by the thought of being a helper, consider this: the same term is used of God repeatedly throughout scripture. You're in good company.

The problem Paul is talking about here is that Adam stood by passively as Satan tempted Eve and Eve listened to him. He did not lead her and remind her of God's word and thus humankind fell into sin, NOT because women are more deceivable, but because the man did not step up to his God ordained role of protecting the woman. For this, the blame for the fall is placed rightly and squarely on Adam. And as is typical in relationships today, Adam blames the woman, the woman makes excuses for her husband's sin and blames Satan.

Saved Through Childbearing.

vs 15 - Yet she will be saved through childbearing--if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control.

Yet she shall be saved! How wonderful is this?! How merciful of God to allow anyone to escape the due consequence for their sin!? But oh my, how confusing is this verse!? If ripped out of context and held up on it's own, this would be utter heresy. So what is going on?

First we have to recognize that the word saved has a very very broad range of meaning, and we tend to think of it very narrowly. Most of the time when we say saved, we mean something more along the lines of what the bible means when it says "justified" or "forgiven". The Bible is clear, that salvation in this sense is by God's grace alone! Through faith in the gospel message that we've already discussed: that you are a sinner, separated from God, spiritually dead, but Christ died to take the punishment that we deserve for our sin, so that we might be reunited with God!

So, no, justification does not come through childbirth, it is through faith. The word saved in this sense means to be made whole. To be healed. To become fully oneself. Paul is telling us the truth here, that as a woman continually and joyfully walks in the God-ordained feminine role, with faith in the Jesus, love for God and people, holiness and all with self-control, she will find who God truly intended her to be! He uses the most obvious example of the uniqueness of the female, motherly, familial, support role to show this. What is the most obvious thing a woman can do that no man can do? Give birth!

This is not saying women are to remain barefoot and pregnant in the kitchen! This is saying be who God created you to be! You have a sisterly and motherly instinct! The church needs that! You also have a fleshly desire to reject God's plan for you and domineer and you will struggle with this desire. Oh, but struggle with it and do not give in. In this fight against your flesh, and the war of playing the most beautiful role possible for you to play, you will find yourself. Trust God's word here.

Summary

Paul's message here is to the men. Step up! Protect the Church by rightly handling God's Word! Stop wasting your time watching TV, playing video games, surfing the Internet. Step up and be a man! Get a job and learn your Bible. Lead out in prayer! This is what God created us to do!

Men, are you ready to step up and lead? Next week we're talking about what this will take.

Some Helpful Resources

- www.cbmw.org
- Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood - Grudem and Piper
- Man and Woman in Christ - Clark
- New Testament Leadership in Action Today - Knox and Hopler
- On Church Leadership, or Vintage Church- Driscoll