

## Lesson Two

INSTRUCT IN PUBLIC WORSHIP  
I Timothy 2:1-15

MEN AND PUBLIC WORSHIP

SECTION I I Timothy 2:1-8

**2** First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men, **2** for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way. **3** This is good, and it is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, **4** who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. **5** For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, **6** who gave himself as a ransom for all, the testimony to which was borne at the proper time. **7** For this I was appointed a preacher and apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

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

Chapter two breaks into two main divisions as Paul provides guidelines for men and then for women in worship. "Living Under Authority"

could be a supplementary heading as both men and women are told to respond to authority in definite ways.

That public worship is in Paul's mind is suggested by (1) the statement that prayers "be made"; (2) similarity of this chapter in its latter part to I Corinthians 11 and 14 which deals with public worship; (3) context of chapters 1 and 3 deal with public worship; (4) the reference to praying for kings was in reference to an old Jewish controversy about prayers for heathen kings in public worship; (5) "lifting holy hands" was done in public worship; (6) early church fathers applied this chapter so; (7) and Paul's emphasis upon men leading in prayer would be true in public worship because women surely prayed at home for kings.

V. 1 **first** suggests Paul's beginning comments and **also** (v. 9) indicates his second point. For some reason, most translations begin the second half of this chapter at verse 8.

The four types of prayer overlap in meaning, but each does have a definite emphasis. **Supplications**, special or definite needs; **prayers**, always present or general needs; **intercessions**, needs of others; **thanksgiving**, the spirit of each one. By using different words, Paul emphasizes our need to pray for **all men** no matter what their particular need may be. Too often our prayer pattern falls into the limited, childish, "Bless Mommy, Daddy, and me, Amen." Can we pray for sinners? Paul says we can and should!

V. 2 **kings** — Nero, the butcher of the church, was emperor of Rome at this time. He was the one who burned the city and blamed Christians. He tarred their bodies and used them as torchlights for his garden parties. Ultimately, he beheaded Paul. But the Apostle declared that we must pray even for such as Nero. For this former legalistic, persecuting Pharisee to write such words illustrates the transforming power of the Gospel in his life.

**peaceable life** — We do not pray for God to overlook the ruler's sin, but that he might rule wisely and justly, permitting us to worship without harassment. Roman rulers soon demanded worship. Paul does not say we should pray to, but for the ruler. A second reason is given in verse 4, that we might spread the Gospel to all men. We grumble about governmental restriction, but do we ever pray that God will guide our leaders into more Christian postures?

V. 4 **desires** — God wishes all men to accept Christ and even delays judgment to permit more to repent (II Pet. 3:9). But He does not force nor predestinate anyone to serve Him, but gives all a choice based upon knowledge. Our work is to provide the testimony (v. 6) by which faith comes to the hearer (Rom. 10:14-17). God has done His part in sending a Savior (Jn. 3:16). Now man must do his part to "save himself" (Acts 2:40) by responding.

## THIRTEEN LESSONS ON I, II TIMOTHY & TITUS

Vs. 5, 6 Paul notes that the same truth is for all because we have: (1) one God (v. 5); (2) one Mediator (v. 5); one Ransom (v. 6); (4) one message (v. 6). The Jew was not saved differently than the Gentile. A **mediator** is one who communicates between two differing parties. Paul emphasizes the manhood (*anthropos*, mankind, humankind) of Jesus in opposition to the gnostic philosophy which declared God could not become flesh without defilement. But Jesus was both perfect Man (Heb. 4:14-16) and perfect God (Col. 1:15-20). The first Adam separated man from God by his sin; our Second Adam reunites God and man by His obedience (Rom. 5:12-21). Even in prayer, we recognize His mediatorship (Jn. 14:13). No Bible passage ever suggests using Mary or a saint as a mediator.

V. 7 **for this** — Paul sees his life's purpose as being a voice for God. Is there a more noble task than being God's ambassador? We cannot be apostles, but we can be proclaimers and teachers of His Word.

V. 8 **holy hands** — In discussing prayer, Paul has suggested its nature (1a), scope (1b-2a), and results (2b-4). Now he describes prayer attitudes MEN should have. (*Aner* means male, and not mankind, *anthropos*. Paul does not encourage women to lead in public worship — 2:11, 12; 1 Cor. 14:34.) The lifting of hands was customary in public prayer (Psa. 63:4; Lk. 24:50), but other postures are mentioned such as standing (Gen. 18:22), bowing the head (Gen. 24:28), lifting eyes heavenward (Psa. 25:15), kneeling (II Chron. 6:13), face on the ground (Gen. 17:3), head between knees (I Kings 18:42). Attitude of heart is more important than position of our body as is emphasized by the word **holy**.

**Anger, quarreling** — Early Christians would find it easy to pray in bitterness toward rules of others who had *deeply hurt them*. But, as in the example of Acts 4:23-31, they prayed for those who persecuted them (Mt. 5:38-48). The word for *quarreling* could also be translated "doubting" as it is in Phil. 2:14, Lk. 2:35; 24:38. I'm sure these Christians questioned, "Is God really hearing our prayers? Nero is still laying waste the church." Pray in love, not anger, toward others and in faith, not doubt, toward God.

### DISCUSSION STARTERS:

1. Are our prayers too often limited to those whom we know?
2. How can we — or even should we — pray for evil people?
3. If God wants to save everyone, why doesn't He?
4. Does the position of our body during prayer indicate or even dictate the content of our prayer?
5. Will God answer a prayer asked in anger or in doubt? (cf. Mt. 6:12; Jas. 1:6-7)

## WOMEN AND GODLY SERVICE

## SECTION II I Timothy 2:9-15

9 also that women should adorn themselves modestly and sensibly in seemly apparel, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly attire 10 but by good deeds, as befits women who profess religion. 11 Let a woman learn in silence with all submissiveness. 12 I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to keep silent. 13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve; 14 and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. 15 Yet woman will be saved through bearing children, if she continues in faith and love and holiness, with modesty.

V. 9 **also** — Paul moves his attention from men to women. This word may indicate a simple conjunction correlating with “first of all” in v. 1. Or Paul may be suggesting that women should display the same spirit and attitude manifested by men in public prayer in v. 8. This section breaks into two parts: (1) proper apparel (9-11); (2) proper attitude (12-15).

**adorn** — This word, *kosmos*, means well-arranged, orderly, decent, or modest, and is the same word in 3:2 where elders are instructed to be “dignified” (“of good behavior” KJV). It is the root of our word cosmetic, and according to Trench, the well-ordering refers not only to the external, but the internal as well.

**modestly** — Improperly translated “shamefacedness” in KJV, and corrected to “shamefastness” in ASV. It is that attitude of modesty that makes us hold our “shame” fast or close to us rather than to display it publically.

**sensibly** — *Sophron* means self-controlled, outward order reflecting inward control. This word is also applied to elders (3:2 “sensible”), and to all Christians (II, 1:7; Tit. 2:2, 4, 5, 6, 12). Legalism forces outward change only; true Christianity produces a controlled inner self that is seen in outward change.

**seemly** — The same word before translated *adorn*. Paul’s statements can best be summed up in our word modest as applied to attitude as well as dress. Immodesty can be shown by: (1) under-dressing, producing lust in the eye of a man; (2) over-dressing, producing envy in the heart of one poorer; (3) mis-dressing, wearing a swim suit to church or a tuxedo to play ball indicating a careless or rebellious attitude; (4) salad-dressing, weird or faddish clothing to “get a rise” out of others and to call undue attention to our daring.

## THIRTEEN LESSONS ON I, II TIMOTHY & TITUS

While we properly condemn scanty dress as immodest, please notice that Paul focuses attention on elaborate dressing by wearing gold netting (BRAIDS) in the hair, or sporting costly pearls about the neck, or wearing costly clothing to make others envy us (cf. I Pet. 3:1-6; Isa. 3:18-24; Prov. 11:22). **Good deeds** — not good looks — is what God desires of us. Dressing or acting in such a way to create lust or envy in others, or to call undue attention to our wealth or person is certainly not the Jesus way. And Paul's principles apply to men as well as women!

V. 11 A woman's dress reveals her inner character and so does her actions. Thus, she must **learn in silence**. In the ancient world, women were servers, not learners. Martha reflected this idea (Lk. 10:38-42). Rather than seeing this as a "put down" of women, we should view it as a step up for Paul, as did Jesus, recognizes women as legitimate learners and fellow disciples. But he does not place woman in a place of authoritative leadership for God did not so create her. **Silence** is the converse of "teach" and does not suggest absolute stillness as is seen in Acts 22:2 where this same word is used. Woman may participate in the worship, but not lead it. Paul discusses this idea in greater detail in I Cor. 14:34, 35.

**submissiveness** — This word does not mean oppressive domination, but humble respect to the one in authority (same word in Rom. 13:1; Eph. 5:23). This is the key to this section. Paul deems it unseemly, unwomanly, and unscriptural for woman to dominate man; God has created her for a supportive role.

V. 12 **I permit** is not merely Paul's opinion for it has the force of a command (cf. Mk. 10:4; I Cor. 14:34), and Paul underscores it with timeless, not cultural, reasons as he refers back to Adam and Eve.

**to teach** — Women are to do some teaching (see below) and certainly are expected to share their faith with others, but they are not to hold the office of teacher or preacher as a teacher is a person of authority (Acts 13:1; Eph. 4:11; Tit. 2:15). That authority, and not just teaching itself, is the main idea in Paul's mind is seen by the word he uses which means to "lord it over, to dictate to." In Gen. 3:16, this is the phrase used in the Greek Septuagint, "He shall rule (lord over) you," in reference to man's role. The word "usurp" in the KJV is not in the Greek text. It doesn't matter even if she is "given" the authority, she is stepping out of her supportive, womanly role when she lords it over a man.

Women did serve Christ in Bible times. They participated in group prayer meetings (Acts 1:14; 12:5; I Cor. 11:5); gave Bible information to others (Jn. 4:39; 20:17); taught younger women (Tit. 2:3, 4); taught children (II Tim. 1:5; 3:15); shared their faith with others (Acts 18:26); and served in various labors (Acts 9:36; Phil. 4:3; I Tim. 5:10-16; Rom. 16:1, 6, 12). They also prophesied, a gift no longer in the church today (Lk. 2:36; Acts

21:8, 9; I Cor. 11:5). But never did women preach sermons, oversee a church, or function in a role that made her an authority over men.

Granted, circumstances exist when a woman must teach the Word, or it is not taught. Such times exist on certain mission fields, in classes where men refuse to teach, or in a marriage with a non-Christian husband. These exceptions, if they are such, should be of *short* duration until a man is trained to teach the class, the mission field developed, or the non-Christian won. Even in these instances, the Christian woman should conduct herself with proper decorum lest her attitude and action destroy the effect of her words.

V. 13 **Adam formed first** — In alluding to creation, Paul removes his argument from that of cultural bias against women. He amplifies this thought in I Cor. 11:9 by suggesting that man was created with a more dominant nature, and woman of a more supportive one. This is not to suggest woman is inferior to man, has less mental ability than he, or is in any way inferior to the male (Gal. 3:28). Neither does it give man license to grind woman beneath his heel; rather, it demands that he protect her because of his greater strength (I Pet. 3:7) and love her in the same spirit Christ does His church (Eph. 5:21-33). Most women by nature agree that God has designed her to be a home-maker rather than an empire-builder.

V. 14 **Adam not deceived** — This second reason suggests that woman's judgment is less designed for leadership than man's. Eve was deceived; Adam apparently willfully sinned. The woman's action is probably more excuseable (if sin is ever excuseable), but this compassionate and believing nature makes her less suited to be a leader. Her nature better fits her to mend broken hearts and to fill a home with love than to rule others. In I Corinthians, Paul adds three more reasons: (1) nature (11:14); (2) universal custom of the churches (11:16); (3) God's law (14:34). To argue that Paul disliked women or that this was ancient word bias is to ignore the reasons Paul provides.

V. 15 **bearing children** — Three interpretations have been suggested: (1) saved from physical death in childbearing (but Godly women do die in childbirth); (2) saved by bringing the Savior into the world by childbirth (Gal. 4:4); (3) saved by fulfilling her proper sphere in life as wife, mother, and keeper of the home typified by this symbolic act of childbearing. Although the second has a certain charm to it and is preferred by many commentators, I feel that the third best fits the preceding context. Woman is not to be a leader, but a helper. Salvation comes not by ruling, but by being what God has called her to be.

**if she continues** — Literally, this reads, "if they continue." A person's salvation is never dependant upon what others believe, but it suggested that if she has done well as a mother, her children will reflect it (Prov.

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22:6). A more reasonable interpretation as indicated by the RSV translation is to realize that Paul now speaks to women (individuals) and no longer as woman (corporate womankind), each of whom finds salvation not only in service, but also in Christian attitudes.

### DISCUSSION STARTERS:

1. Why do people dress immodestly?
2. Does our choice of dress reveal our character? How?
3. Can clerical collars, Amish dark clothing, Catholic nun's habits, or other religion-proclaiming garb be immodest?
4. Can one be immodest in attitude and not in dress?
5. Does Paul's principle of men leading women suggest that women are inferior?
6. Do you feel Paul's reasoning on this matter applies to our generation?
7. It has been said that "women lead only when men will not." If true, does this suggest that the "woman problem" is really a "man problem"?