

1 Tim 2b

Vs 9, 10 The first half of the chapter was regarding Paul's desire to have prayers lifted up for all. Continuing in instruction for the church, this second half deals with women specifically. Please see the intent here in Paul's words. This has been taken to extremes of legalism. He is asking for women to dress in accord with their profession of faith. I want to be very blunt and say a woman of God should not dress provocatively. I haven't heard a sermon on this for thirty years or more. Our culture is not something to be followed in this regard. Our worth is not in our attraction to the opposite sex but God's acceptance of us in Christ. He specifically speaks against costly adornment. Again, there is nothing wrong with a nice dress, a gold ring, earrings, etc. but what is our motivation in the adornment and is it excessive? Is it in accord with our faith? I don't understand braided or plated hair unless it was an elaborate style that promoted vanity. Men can go overboard in this area to but it usually takes the form of muscle shaping, tans, and hair style – GQ clothing. Do you see how the focus is not on who I am in Christ but who I am in the eyes of others? It is a heart issue that expresses itself in adornment. What is the opposite extreme?

Vs 11 The word "silence" is translated differently in Acts 22:2. As we have discussed before, "all may prophecy" seems to encourage the translation "quietness" here. The Greek according to Strong's 'does not officiously meddle with the affairs of others'. Verse 2 of the chapter uses a variation of this same word when it describes a quiet or peaceable life. According to Vine's it indicates 'tranquillity arising from within, causing not disturbance to others, meek'. That fits with "all submission" or "subjection". It does not mean that women have no input but that they submit to the man's final say in the home and in the church.

Vs 12 I have heard so many different interpretations of this verse but let us try to see the simple New Testament context. I believe Eph 4:11 describes the gifts of elders. I say that because those gifts are equipping gifts. Apt to teach is a qualification of an elder. In this passage it is put with having authority over a man. Sometimes this Greek word for (to teach) is to discharge the office of a teacher. We have been blessed by women sharing things the Lord has shown them. Is it within the context of this verse to say we should not have a woman hold the office of teacher over men as it is an exercise of authority over man?

Arguments I have heard include, "the Ephesian women were immature and needed to grow up first". Why would they be less mature than the men? Or the main argument is that "this is a cultural issue that not longer applies". If that is true we need to take a magic marker and color out the next two verses.

Vs 13 What is Eve's job description in the Garden? Did God make the man for the woman? Then it goes back to the very design of woman and intent of God.

As we have seen with eldership, when you monkey with God's design and intent then we suffer the consequences. This is not a salvation issue, but a conformity to God's design issue. Always keep this in light of Eph 5 that the husband is to love the wife as Christ loved the church and gave himself for her. We tend to look at this issue from a chauvinist perspective rather than Jesus and the bride perspective.

Vs 14 If that weren't enough we have the example of the Garden. Adam was given the command. Gen 2:16 Apparently Adam passed it on to Eve (her teacher) but Eve took the lead in deciding to go another direction than God and her husband's instruction. Then she led Adam down the same path. Can God use a woman to teach or preach? Deborah, Esther, and some modern women I can think of say He can do whatever He wants with us clay pots. However, his design and order have women in loving support of men that should be servant leaders. Is Paul trying to hog the authority? I'm sure he would let a woman be stoned, whipped, shipwrecked in his place if he were not submitted to the Spirit. With godly leadership comes responsibility and burden. The natural man thinks of leadership as prestige and benefits – power wielding. That is so contrary to Scriptural authority exemplified in Christ.

Vs 15 This text has several legitimate possible translations. "saved by the birth of the Child" or "saved by accepting their role as mothers" I think the latter fits the text. "If they continue..." conditional! Continuing in the faith is often mentioned as a condition of salvation. It seems we can let go of our faith if we choose. Ro 11:19-21, Heb 3:14, 10:35, Rev 2,3 To him who overcomes... Love, holiness, and modesty are things that should accompany a woman's faith. It seems that Ephesus, like our culture today, encouraged women to be immodest. Do not be conformed to the world, but let your godly influence change those you come in contact with.

The principle I gleaned from this passage: Our appearance and manners should conform to our inner life in Christ and His design for us.
Next week, 3:1-7.