

1 Timothy 2:11-15 (Part 2)

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“Let a woman quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. For it was Adam who was first created, *and* then Eve. And *it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being quite deceived, fell into transgression. But women shall be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.*”

Introduction

Last week, we discussed the controversial text in 1 Timothy 2. And if you'll turn there, we will embark to close that section up. I went excessively long last week because I was trying to squeeze in this one final verse to make it all nice and tidy, but we were not able to do that so we need to finish that up this morning.

Please turn over to 1 Timothy 2:11-15 and as we look at that verse, I want to remind you of William D. Mounce's commentary on this issue of a woman's role in the church—that essential quality and worth is not the same thing as designated function. He makes that important point because underlying much of the discussion concerning women's role in the church (in the corporate gathering) lies the implicit assumption that a limited role necessitates a diminished personal worth.

Now make sure you understand what Dr. Mounce is saying. He's saying that there is this attitude among us that says that if someone is limited in their role, then somehow they are degraded in terms of their personal worth as a human being. He goes on to say:

“It is no wonder that the discussion of women in ministry can become so heated. Yet the equating of worth and roles is non-biblical, secular, and not true to reality. Nowhere in Scripture are role and ultimate worth ever equated. In fact, we constantly we find the opposite. The last will be first (Matthew 19:30; John 13:16).”

In other words, it's not so much about one's “role.” Even if you come first, it doesn't make your worth much greater because “the first will be last.” The suffering servant Himself talks about how “He [had] come to serve, not to be served.”

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” (Mark 10:45)

Does that mean that because of His role as a suffering servant He is less than us since He is our servant? Of course not!

Paul's analogy of the church as the body of Christ teaches us that our particularly distinct roles do not end up removing our necessity. In other words, if my ear were to be unhappy and decide to leave because it's not my eye, then there's something inappropriate and unfortunate about that. We have our distinct roles and he goes on to say that even in the Godhead there is an eternal division of roles, but the three members of the Godhead are co-equal and of equal essence.

I think there are two things we want to set about to think through so that we might be able to better understand what this text is talking about.

1. One thing is that idea right there—that **different roles do not necessitate some sense of higher or lesser worth**. That is a pure lie. I have the role of being a pastor of this church. Am I greater in honor or in anything than any of you here in the eyes of God? Of course not!

According to James, I incur a stricter judgment as a teacher of the Word of God and properly so. In fact, every male in this room, especially if you are married, incur stricter judgment. Why? Because God puts your headship (which is not just privilege, nor mere royalty; it is a position of service), what you do and don't do, by way of spiritual example and spiritual discipline, God says you will held accountable. He will hold you to account for the man that you are; for the husband that you are. In fact in later verses, we'll be talking about the qualifications of

an elder and we'll see that, indeed, God places a premium even on the spiritual leaders and who they are in their homes.

So, this idea that worth is tied to whether or not you have the ability to perform certain functions in the church is foolishness and we need to let that go.

2. The second thing that I think is fundamental for us to understand and appreciate what the Scriptures say about all these things is to **take the Scriptures at face value**. We need to develop an approach of asking what does the Word of God say and not what do I wish it would say.

Now, here's the thing—is theology important? Absolutely. However, a theology that is not derived from the exact teaching of Scripture is the same as any philosophical system. The reason why I bring that up is because I'm using the most positive and excellent example of things that we understand—theology. Aside from it, we have our own worldviews about so many particular things and if we begin to desire to see in the Scriptures certain teachings because it better fits with our understanding of the world, then we are in the wrong. At that point, the Scriptures no longer have authority over us; we have decided to have authority over it and over our Lord and that is not a position that we want to remain in—that is not the position of a genuine believer who submits to the Word of God and believes that it is inspired or profitable for all good things.

"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness." (2 Timothy 3:16).

Now having those two pillars in mind, we can approach this particular text and understand its value to us and appreciate its message. I'm not going to rehash the entire sermon from last week which was excessively long. As I said, feel free to get the CD, you'll get an earful (and then some) and if you have questions, feel free to ask. It's not one of those where "I said it and that's that and it settles it." No, I believe that the Word of God says it and that should settle it, but if it hasn't settled it, then fine. Let's talk. Let's examine. Let's look at what the Scriptures have to say and examine in the context of *all* the Word of God in case we might be in the wrong and by "we," I mean that sincerely, myself as well.

Personally, I don't think this is an ambiguous text, but I think it may be so for some because their hearts desire is that it would say something different because that's the nature of the world and how it presses its worldviews upon us. Having said that let us look together at this final verse.

Review of the Context of 1 Timothy 2:11-15

The context to which we are speaking in chapter two is that of the corporate congregation. In other words, what we mean by corporate congregation or gathering is when the fellowship of saints gathers together in worship in the church. We're not talking about women being prohibited from teaching or working or from doing things that they are completely capable of doing. We're not talking about limiting them in an entire area. We're talking about the particular office of preaching, to teach, or to exercise authority over a man.

"But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet." (v. 12)

In other words, they are to be like everyone else in the congregation (i.e. in full submission to the teaching of the Word). Every male was to do the exact same thing. Any woman, according to the Word of God, is not allowed to preach or participate in the preaching function in this context. That's what verse 12 says.

It clearly says that women are not to be pastors; they are not to have authority; they are not to be preachers. Can they minister and teach one another in the context of hanging out with friends? Of course. Can they teach children? Of course. Can they teach one another? Of course. Can they even instruct men in the privacy of private meetings? Of course. That is not a maybe—that's an "Of course!"

Did not Priscilla (woman) and Aquila (man) instruct Apollos in the things of the Lord?

"and he began to speak out boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately." (Acts 18:26)

It's not wrong. The whole point is that the pastor—the elder—is not to be a woman. That is the specific point of what Paul is writing about and he gives us a couple examples of why in verses 13 and 14.

"For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve. And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being quite deceived, fell into transgression." (vv. 13-14)

- **"For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve." (v. 13)** Paul uses as his first example Adam and Eve. We said that God had purposely created Adam after He made all the animals and that He paraded them before Adam in order for him to name them all. Remember how before God even brought the animals to Adam, God said in His own divine wisdom that there was no suitable helper for Adam? He says that from the beginning, even before he parades the animals before Adam, before he names all the animals when Adam notices that the animals have corresponding equals—male and a female. The animals keep coming by and it

just made sense to him. Afterwards, Adam says, "You know, there's no helpmate for me. There is no one corresponding to me."

God had purposefully done that so that Adam would know that he was in some way incomplete in this world without a woman. Then God fashions Eve out of Adam's rib and gives her to him and he has great delight in her and the net result is that he realizes that now he has that corresponding helpmate. God purposely delayed the creation of Eve not as a mistake, but by sovereign design. He wanted Adam to know that He had created Eve to be his helpmate; his corresponding puzzle piece that filled in the gaps in his life.

When Paul writes "**For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve,**" he is saying that Adam was given headship over Eve. I think throughout 1 Corinthians, the idea of "headship" is illustrated through the marriage relationship of a husband over a wife.

- "**And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being quite deceived, fell into transgression.**" The second example mentions how Adam was not the one who was deceived, but the woman being quite deceived fell into transgression. Clearly the emphasis is that Adam was not deceived.

Notice that the word for "**deceived**" is used here for both Adam and Eve, however in Eve's case, it is used with the prefix *epi*. By using that prefix, the word is intensified. The best way I can illustrate that is when we talk about earthquakes. We don't say, "Where is the center of the earthquake?" Rather, we would ask "Where was the epicenter?" The word "epicenter" magnifies the intensity of that center. Paul wants to magnify, intensify the deception of Eve in the same way and the New American Standard translation captures that magnification in its translation: "**but the woman being quite deceived fell into transgression.**" (Emphasis mine)

Does it mean that she is more gullible or less intelligent? Unfortunately, some have suggested that. I don't think that's what it means at all. In fact, if we look at just the facts of science, I think women excel beyond men in many academic pursuits. It's a fact that women tend to be as intelligent or more intelligent.

It has nothing to do with intelligence. It has more to do with how God designed men and women. He purposed men to be in the position of guarding the truth of God in terms of church leadership and in terms of the leadership at home. God designed women to be more relational than logical and cold hearted. Men can fight with one another and later, they can be best friends *without even saying sorry!* Women can have a short discussion about something and despise one another *for almost the rest of their lives!*

God has designed us differently (praise the Lord). There are so many delightful things that God has created in us and it is wonderful how He has fashioned men and women so differently. We ought to appreciate that and that's something that verse 15 brings about—a positive affirmation of the privilege of being a woman (i.e. a child bearer).

And I don't think it's just child bearing. I think that she is part of the entire plan of redemptive history. She's not left out as a secondary thing. She's not "Plan B." She plays a primary role from the very beginning and that's what we'll look at this morning. That's a lot to say just by way of introduction and I said having to summarize it, some of you might say, "Well, you haven't really justified why you could say this..."

Understand that last week, we spent *over an hour* justifying all those things. In any case, let's go to the Lord in prayer and look at this final, great verse and we'll rehash some of the things that we talked about and delight in what God has created in womanhood.

Heavenly Father,

As we come before You, we thank You again for the privilege of being able to sit under the instruction of Your Word.

Lord, as we discussed last week, it was not a privilege that was given to women of the time of Christ and even up to the time of the church.

Lord, they were not allowed to learn the things of the Torah. Even the Mishnah forbid women to learn the things of the Law, although some did.

And Father, we thank You that those times are gone. We hope those times are gone. We thank You that our ladies can sit and listen and understand and desire to know and grow in the things of the knowledge of the Word, and Lord, that we, as men in this room, remember that we are called to that divine and glorious purpose to serve the ladies of our congregation by our act of leadership and service unto them.

Lord, may none of it, our particular roles as men or women, be hindered by a self-seeking desire to exalt ourselves or to see ourselves as either more privileged or less privileged. But instead, Lord, help us to really and humbly come before You, accepting what the Word of God has to say and delighting in it and knowing that whatever the Word of God says, then that is the best equation to meet with the greatest sense of contentment in this world.

Father, I pray that You would give us humility—all of us, even myself—as we approach this text; that we would delight in what Your Word has to say and teach us; and that we would uphold the ladies highly because clearly in the Word of God, You uphold them highly.

So we praise You and ask that You would instruct and give us just the blessing of the ministry of Your Holy Spirit to the power of Your Word.

*In Jesus' name,
Amen.*

Review of 1 Timothy 2:8-15

“Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissension. Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments; but rather by means of good works, as befits women making a claim to godliness. Let a woman quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve. And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being quite deceived, fell into transgression. But women shall be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.”

Remember that the context of this passage is the idea of the corporate gathering and really verses 8 thru 15 should be one paragraph. Some of your study Bibles might even have it that way. In this paragraph, we come to the role of men in the corporate gathering and one of their primary functions is to be an example by **“lifting up holy hands”** in prayer.

It's important to keep this in mind because we have spent the last two weeks on the prohibition of women from preaching (while at the same time exalting them for their God-given design and purpose in the course of human history) and it would be easy to forget that there's a lot charged to the men in this same portion of Scripture. For example, in verse 8 it says:

“Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissension.”

Men are to pray. They are to lead the corporate prayers that are mentioned in verse 1, that is, these ideas of “entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men” particularly for the gospel. A church was to gather together, according to the Word of God, and seek the Lord; that His salvation would come to those around us. Who were to lead the church in that? The men.

Now, when it speaks about women being in quietness (we talked about it last week already) it does not mean that they are just to be quiet, as if they were not allowed to participate in prayer. No, they're allowed to participate in prayer. Does not 1 Corinthians tell us very clearly that women are to do that, however, to do that carefully and not get all out of control? Neither are the men to get out of control about it. It is to be done orderly and in a manner which all can participate in the corporate gathered prayer. But, men are to lead that. You see, this is the function, a part of what spiritual leadership means—prayer.

Men, we can examine ourselves to see if we are truly prepared for the leadership of being a husband and of being a father by examining our spiritual lives in regard to whether we pray with earnestness for people's salvation. If you say, “No, I don't really” then perhaps that's an area in which we need to refocus our minds and attention because that is part of our spiritual leadership in the home, in the church, etc. Do we go unto the power of the Lord for salvation for all men? That is part of what we are to do, particularly in the corporate prayer time.

Notice how the last part of 1 Timothy 2:8 says **“without wrath and dissension.”** We commented about that phrase two to three weeks ago. We wondered why Paul would mention the idea of “wrath and dissension” (i.e. this idea of in-fighting). Why would you mention that in the midst of corporate prayer? It was likely that the men who were leading these corporate times of prayer were doing just that, trying to convict those that who were in error—those elders in the church in Ephesus.

Paul was writing with tension in mind, how these good men were probably getting up, much like our worship guys would get up, and lead us in prayer and sing, “Lord, help some of these men here because they do not understand the Word of God and they are in heresy.” After a while instead of corporate prayer, it became this sense of **“wrath and dissension.”** What Paul is saying is that that's not appropriate behavior or attitude for prayer (i.e. in-fighting).

“Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments; but rather by means of good works, as befits women making a claim to godliness.”

Paul then makes a transition from the men to the women and the proper manner in how they approach corporate worship, which is in modest dress and good works **“as befits women making a claim to godliness;”** which is to say that he is speaking of those kind of excellent qualities that would be appropriate for one who seeks godly things rather than worldly things.

“Let a woman quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet.”

Again in the corporate worship setting, a woman is not allowed to preach or to have an authoritative ministry over a man, **“but to remain quiet”** (to be silent) in order for her to be able to learn and hear the teaching.

“For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve. And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being quite deceived, fell into transgression. But women shall be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.”

Then in verse 14 says **“it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being quite deceived, fell into transgression.”** Why is this interesting? The answers are implicit in God’s design of Adam and Eve. Adam was first created then Eve in order to make sure that Adam understood his headship and his responsibility—to make sure that Eve was growing in spiritual things and to protect her. If he failed to fulfill his responsibilities, then judgment would fall on him and clearly that’s exactly what happens, according to [Romans 5:12-21](#).

“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—for until the Law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many. And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification. For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. For as through the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous. And the Law came in that the transgression might increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

In this section of Romans, we see how it was through Adam (man) sin entered into the world. Chauvinists would ask, “Shouldn’t we say through one woman sin entered into the world. It was Eve that sinned first, wasn’t it?” Scriptures clearly point at and God says absolutely that it was Adam’s sin that brought death to all of us. If you know anyone that is not a believer (as I’m sure all of us do) that person lies under the condemnation of sin and death because of the responsibility of one person—Adam. Notice how Eve is not even mentioned in Romans 5. It is Adam and he alone because he was given headship and if you think of it that way, then you understand that God had designed that role for him (i.e. headship).

And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being quite deceived, fell into transgression.”

Consider that when it says, **“And it was not Adam who was deceived...”** that that is not necessarily a commendation of Adam. You guys understand that right? We said that the Genesis 3 account makes it pretty obvious (at least we can assume so) that Eve after her short discussion with the serpent, says that the fruit looked good to eat and it seemed desirable to be like unto God; she eats the fruit and then, she doesn’t ring the cowbell to call for her husband. He happens to be in the near vicinity, enough to where the verbs are just immediate. She takes. She eats. She gives. He eats. He happens to be right there. So, did he fail? Absolutely! Does God hold him accountable for all of eternity in the Scriptures? No question about that.

Furthermore, I think that the idea that Adam was not deceived and that Eve was quite deceived points to an ontological argument about the inherent qualities of men and women. I believe that due to the placement of the emphasis in the beginning of the verse on Adam being not deceived and woman being quite deceived pointing to a God-given design that makes men more capable of guarding and keeping truth than women.

I know that that sounds weird and understand what I’m saying with that. I’m not saying that women cannot keep secrets or something bizarre like that. What I am saying is that implicitly men have the ability to fight. Unfortunately, that same ability to fight often leads them to actual fighting and all sorts of manners of sin and generally speaking, women are not prone to such excesses. That is virtuous for the women, but at the same time, it can be a detriment to the woman. For the men, it might be virtuous at times and at times detrimental (i.e. his bravery).

There is this natural giftedness that some seem to be born with, that is inherent in individuals. For example, some of you guys might be excellent students. You are studious and you excel in the academic environment. That is great. So, by way of the power of the Holy Spirit, you could use that to great effect. You could read faster than a lot of us, so you read good books. You’re able to synthesize ideas, so you’re able to communicate it to somebody else, even if they didn’t read that book.

Why am I talking about all these things? Because if it is true that we can have inherent or natural or God-given abilities, then we can make an argument that there are inherent qualities specific to men and women. We can say that for the most part women are more relational than men and that they are more cold-hearted or logical than women. Obviously, these are generalities, but they are still part of our general (and perhaps even genetic) make up, which I believe even science suggests. Remember how we looked at all those differences between men and women? For men, the left side of the brain

develops faster than in women. Conversely, the right side of the brain develops faster in women, which allows them to be more relational, more abstract. Women tend to understand some things that guys are really dumb about. Is that by design? I absolutely think so. Does that make one or the other better? No, but they make men and women better in particular areas. It's just kind of interesting that's how God has designed us.

So, in terms of the man of God who protects the Word of God, he must be someone who is not only helpful and sensible, but also someone who can divorce himself from the relational and emotional aspects of ministry and defend the truth with accuracy. Why? Because as a pastor-teacher, I have to go and talk to people in the congregation and confront them about sin. Nobody likes to do that. Who wants to counsel over months over some sin issue? Nobody wants to do that in the face of a friend. But if the pastors, if the elders, if the leaders of your church, if your dads and the husbands of the homes aren't willing to do that, then we have a world that's will fall into chaos and anarchy.

On the flip side, I was thinking about how I can imagine Paul being glad that the elders who he had to confront were men and not women. Why? Because generally speaking (and I apologize in advance for stereotyping), if these elders were women and you had to confront their error, I think they would take that very personally. Don't get me wrong, men would also take it personally, but at some point, men could logically and almost cold-heartedly and appropriately handle rebuke. And I think that's part of the reason why the office of an elder is reserved for men. The servant leaders (e.g. deacons, deaconesses) are open to both men and women, but the elders (who are charged with teaching the Word) are men only.

So, let's get to verse 15 and talk about the privilege of womanhood.

The Privilege of Womanhood (v. 15)

“But *women* shall be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.”

Paul is not trying to denigrate women and those who would call him a male-chauvinist are greatly mistaken. Considering how he was trained as a Pharisee and how the Mishnah taught men things like when you pray, you should pray to be thankful that you're not a woman, a dog, or a Gentile. Why? Because Gentiles, although they can become converted they can only go as far as learning the Torah. Dogs, they don't know better, so you don't really hold them to account. But a woman, she can never learn from the Torah.

Additionally, there was this weird attitude that had fostered amongst some of the Pharisees (not all of them, but many of them) that you could divorce your wife for burning your meal! Remember we talked about that? Men could do all kinds of horrifying things to women in this time and would do it under the pretext that because of her gender. Remember also how in the New Testament, the first individuals that witnessed the resurrected Lord was not Peter nor John, but the Marys. It was the ladies. However, since it was the women who witnessed it, the disciples wouldn't believe their account or their testimony about the risen Lord because a woman's word could not stand in a public hearing, in a court, at that time.

There was great deal of discrimination towards women in biblical times and yet, here's Paul and in this final verse, exalting them in terms of redemptive history. It's a beautiful statement.

Of all the verses in this section (i.e. verses 11 thru 15), this verse is by far, in this context—in this section, the most difficult one to interpret because it is such a bizarre way of saying something. But one thing that is absolutely clear is that Paul upholds the place of women and says that they have the privilege of salvation.

“But *women* shall be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.”

Paul just finished declaring how transgression came into the world. Look at verse 14 again, it says that it “...*it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being quite deceived, fell into transgression.*” The verb tense there for falling into transgression is the perfect tense. She fell back then, in time—in history, into transgression and that transgression remains true unto us today.

In other words, it's that same concept found in Romans 5 that sin is in the end, placed on the represented head of Adam. His sin caused us all to pay the penalty of sin which is death. They fell into transgression and we also remain so to this day. In contrast, Paul says “**But *women* shall be preserved [saved]...**”

The transgression has come because Eve was deceived, but he says women shall be saved. The NASB editors translated the Greek word *sozo* (σώζω) as “**shall be preserved.**” Alternate translations (e.g. ESV) did a better job by translating it as “**saved.**” Women shall be “**saved through the bearing of children...**” This is one of those instances where the NASB translators did a poor job translating. For instance, the verb “**shall be preserved**” is really in the singular form, not the plural. Thus, it should not read as it does in the NASB “**But *women* shall be preserved...**” It should rather read this way: “**She shall be saved through the bearing of children...**” which is a more literal translation.

So what exactly does it mean “*but she shall be saved thru childbearing?*” If you think of what all the New Testament and the Old Testament teaches us about salvation, you would immediately say, “Well, it can't be salvation. It can't be salvation by giving birth because how about all the women that don't give birth and what about the men?”

This is one of those passages where we can know what it cannot mean. It cannot mean that childbearing is the one act that will save a human being. We know that that is not what the verse means because that would contradict much of the Pauline epistles and the whole concept of the grace of God being our salvation alone, by faith in God alone (Ephesians 2:8-9); no one can work to save themselves, nor can they even make themselves savable. Since that is not a plausible explanation, the question revolves around these two ideas—these two words: 1) that the women will be “**preserved**” or “**saved**”; and 2) this idea of “**childbearing**.”

Some would see this idea of “**she shall be saved**” as a kind of physical deliverance which is why I think the NASB translated it “**but women shall be preserved**.” She is somehow rescued and that could entail a bunch of different things. Those who would argue that point to Genesis 3 stating to be preserved means she doesn’t die while giving birth to children; that she is able to continue to have children despite the pain of childbirth. Some would go so far as to say that the believing wife/mother is able to have a diminished sense of pain in giving childbirth, which I think is ridiculous. I don’t think that’s the proper interpretation of it at all.

It is not physical preservation (“preserved”), but spiritual salvation (“saved”). It’s just the most sensible definition of the word **σῶζω** (σῶζω). In fact, **σῶζω** (σῶζω) is used in the context of 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus a number of times and every time (except possibly this instance if we hold to the idea of preserved) it is talking about spiritual salvation—genuine, true, spiritual salvation.

If that’s the case, then the question is: what does “**bearing of children**” mean? What can it mean that women shall be saved spiritually through childbearing? The Greek word used is **τεκνογονία** (τεκνογονία) and it occurs in this particular form only once in all the New Testament in this passage. In fact, it happens almost so exclusively that outside of the New Testament Greek we cannot even get our fingers on the concept of it. We know what it means transliterally, but the question is what is it talking about? How is Paul using this term? There are a couple excellent perspectives on this.

One would say that the idea here is that women shall be saved through childbearing and childbearing would then become the representative idea of femininity. In other words, it is in keeping her exact distinctions as a woman that she would find salvation; that she would find the humility, the appreciation of how God has designed everything. That makes sense to me. For instance, can a Christian truly be a Christian if he or she does not understand the concept of submission? The answer is no. Why do I say that? Because even the Son of God talked about His own submission unto the role and purpose of the Father. So even in the Godhead, there is this sense in which we are to learn and emulate this idea of submission unto authority. That’s for everybody in this room. I am in submission. If I’m not in submission, I’m not a good Christian let alone a pastor-teacher, etc.

So, those concepts of submission, love, and basically being the woman that she is capable of demonstrating the femininity that is created in her, those virtues are part of the greatness of what salvation is supposed to be. She can be saved in the midst of her femininity if she continues in faith, love, sanctity and self-restraint. There are many great scholars that hold to this view that “childbearing” represents all of her distinctions as a woman (e.g. Wayne Gruden, William Mounce).

That’s not however exactly how I see it. Let me explain what my view is and what the Scripture say, but as I already said before, if you hold to a different view than mine, that’s okay because this is one of those areas that is ambiguous and difficult to understand.

There is a peculiar switch in verse 15 from the singular to the plural. It says “**But women shall be preserved through the bearing of children...**” Remember that this is really in the singular form and should read: “A woman shall be saved through childbearing.” Look at the second half of the verse. “... **if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.**” It now switches to the plural. The switch from singular to plural is a curious one.

You may not have noticed that Paul had been doing that for some time in this particular context. He switched back and forth from verses 8 to 10. He talks about men and women in the plural. In fact, he uses it in the plural sense and the present tense to talk about how we are to come in prayer and how the women (plural) are to be modest in their dress and in their heart (verses 8 to 10). Then, he switches to the singular. In verses 11 and 12, “a woman” is used to make it particular; not to one particular woman, but that womanhood, in general, is not allowed to teach or have authority over a man. Now we said that those terms in verses 11 and 12 are gender specific. He continues this idea of “a man” and “a woman” in verses 13 and 14 for Adam and Eve and then, he switches again.

So what is happening in verse 15 is that it begins with Eve and it says “**but [she] will be saved through childbearing**” and by principle, it is an application for all women—all women of faith “**if they all continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.**” This last part of the verse is not difficult for us to appreciate because that’s statement is true in the Scriptures. It is part of our responsibility to live in faith and love and in sanctity and in holiness and to do that with self-control. That’s just perseverance. That’s just us continuing to grow and be sanctified by the Lord. So that’s not hard to understand.

In some way, Eve is an example of what women, particularly all Christian women, are to be. It’s kind of a crazy suggestion, but that’s what Paul is trying to say. Namely, that just as Eve (a woman) was deceived and brought in this transgression and sin, so will salvation come through a woman giving birth to the Savior. Did you get that?

I want you to notice what it says from the end of verse 14 to verse 15: "... **the woman being quite deceived, fell into transgression. But women shall be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.**" I think that Paul is carefully constructing his idea from what is given in Genesis 3. You may recall that the reason why in verse 14 the constant deception is given to Eve is because that was her confession in Genesis 3. Just as when the Lord confronts Eve, she says *"the serpent deceived me, and I ate."* That's why Paul clings to that concept because I think in some degree, he's using the same kind of language found in Genesis 3. Turn over to Genesis real quick and let's look at this a little more closely because I think this is a valuable insight.

"Then the LORD God said to the woman, 'What is this you have done?' And the woman said, 'The serpent deceived me, and I ate.'" (Genesis 3:13)

And so that's the concept Paul had alluded to in 1 Timothy 2:14. Now, it is important to continue in Genesis 3 to see how it parallels our passage in 1 Timothy. Shortly after Eve's declaration of deception comes the judgment of the serpent.

"And the LORD God said to the serpent, 'Because you have done this, cursed are you more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly shall you go, and dust shall you eat all the days of your life.'" (Genesis 3:14)

Now, I don't know exactly what a serpent looked like before that point in history, but some people think that it looked like a dragon that used to walk around. What about the fact that it spoke to Eve? I have no idea how to take that. Did all the animals talk? I don't think that was the case. There's no recording in scripture of talking animals except that of Balaam's donkey (Numbers 22:28) and that was divinely appointed. So can animals talk? Did the serpent walk? I don't know. It is all speculation.

All I know is that there was a physical curse upon the serpent and in this section from Genesis 3:14-19 is about curses: to the serpent first, then to Eve and finally to Adam. One physical manifestation of the curse upon the serpent is that they would have to crawl on their belly and eat the dust. Look at what verse 15 says (this is a continuing curse upon the serpent):

"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel." (Genesis 3:15)

This is sometimes referred to as the "proto-gospel," which means "first gospel." This is the promise of the Savior. From the beginning, from the very day (maybe that very hour that they sinned) God had promised a Savior and curiously enough, He had promised that Savior through the line of the woman. If that doesn't exalt women, I'm not sure what else could. Let's take a look closely at that promise.

I always wondered why God, as part of His curse on the serpent, said *"I will put enmity between you and the woman..."* because my thinking is, "Well, I understand that the woman and the serpent has enmity, but what about the guy? Lord, You know You got to talk about Adam here. Maybe there's enmity between Adam and the serpent, too?" Because isn't it about guys defending against satanic things?

Notice how there is an excellent switch from Genesis 3:14 to Genesis 3:15. God switches from the physical manifestation of that particular beast (i.e. you're going to crawl on the ground; that's your curse) to the spiritual issue who that beast represents. Then in the later part of verse 15, He talks about the representatives. The representative for Satan is the serpent. So He says, "For you, this is your curse, you will bruise Him who is that seed to come (that Savior to come) you will get Him. You'll bruise Him on the heel."

The picture of a serpent on the heel is probably not a good thing. In fact, our Savior did come and He died for the sake of our sins; to save us from such a death that Adam and Eve brought into our lives. He says, "Here, you'll bruise Him on the heel." And He continues "but He will bruise you on the head." That is a crushing blow. You will die. And you will be killed by the seed of the woman. What God is saying is that Satan will get the best of Christ the Savior at some point, but he will not get the best of Christ in the end because the Savior will crush his head. That's his curse.

So we wonder why there is enmity between Satan and the woman. It is so because the woman then begins to represent not just Eve and all of womankind, but at least in this context of the curse (v. 15), she represents all of humanity. Does she not? And you may say no, that's ridiculous, but it's not. Look at verse 20 of this same chapter.

"Now the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all the living." (Genesis 3:20)

Remember that to this point in account, she did not even have a name. She was just "wife" or "woman." She's *'ishshāh* (אִשָּׁה). Remember, we said that he names her *'ishshāh* in the Hebrew because he's *'lysh* which means "man" or "husband." Adam names her *'ishshāh* ("woman" or "wife") in the same way that our English has "man" and then "woman" because she is taken from him. It's a beautiful designation. On top of that *'ishshāh* as a root word means "to be soft". It's a beautiful declaration of why he calls her that.

It is interesting that after the curse Adam does not call his wife "death" (because she brought forth death to him and for all thereafter), but he names her **chavvah** (חַוְוָה) or "life." Eve's name means "life" and he says that *"because she was the mother of all the living."*

If the context of verse 15 is enmity (anger and hostility) between Satan and Eve (who represents all of humanity at that point), isn't it interesting thing that God preordained from eternity past that salvation would come from the woman. How beautiful and how excellent! How poetic is it that it was Eve who was first deceived (and that's what Paul is trying to get at) would also be the means by which salvation will enter back into the world.

Did you ever wonder why the scriptures say *"her seed"* and not Adam's seed? It's clearly the second Adam in Romans 5. It is because there's an exaltation of what it means for her to be a woman capable of bearing children. Part of her design in propagating the human race is that somebody would be born and He would crush the serpents head. That is the first gospel. That's a beautiful thing and it's an amazing thing.

So when we talk about things like women's role and if people would dare to say things like "that's just your narrow-minded view and it doesn't speak to the value of women, etc." You are ridiculous. Does not God Himself exalt Eve, particularly as the representative of all human kind, specifically of womanly virtue in bearing children? Isn't that the process by which the Redeemer would come into this world? Let's take this step further in talking about the concept of the Virgin birth.

I find it interesting that the Scriptures would demand that Jesus would be born of a virgin. I don't know if you ever thought about that, but for the most part most of us have been raised to believe in the virgin birth of Christ. And you may ask yourself whether that was necessary. Why was the virgin birth so important? The scriptures bear out the importance. Let's take a look.

There are two accounts in the gospels of the genealogy of Christ: Matthew 1 and Luke 3. If you compare them, you will notice that they both trace their genealogies with a fair amount of accuracy. If you were to compare them side by side, you'll notice that from Adam up to David, they are identical (this is appropriate since both Mary and Joseph were from the tribe of Judah through the line of David). From that point on however, both genealogies differ quite a bit and you may ask yourself why would that be from David on to the time of Christ; why would they be so different?

It turns out that Matthew's emphasis in his genealogy is the royal line that Joseph (a carpenter) is a descendant. On the other hand, Luke's genealogy traces the royal line through Mary. But you may still wonder what the big deal is. The big deal is that there is an emphasis God puts into the way or the process by which He brings the Savior into the world. In fact, turn over to Matthew 1. Let me point out something to you.

In Matthew's genealogy ([Matthew 1:1](#)), it says *"The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham..."* and it proceeds to go through the genealogy and at the very end of verse 16, it says and *"and to Jacob was born Joseph..."* and when he says *"was born"* it may be better translated as *"begat,"* (NKJV) since every single person in this genealogy was begat from someone else (e.g. Abraham begat Isaac, Isaac begat Jacob).

Now when it says *"... was born Jesus,"* ([Matthew 1:16](#)) we switch to the passive tense which is different. It's like saying, "So-and-so begat so-and-so begat Jacob finally begat Joseph by whom was born." When it says that *"... Joseph, the husband of Mary, by whom was born Jesus"* that *"by whom"* is singular pronoun and is translated *"by her was born Jesus"* in the Amplified Translation, which I thought was pretty good translation. All of this to say that in the Matthew genealogy (i.e. the line of Joseph), it is not obvious that Jesus was a blood descendant of Joseph. In fact, it says that He was born of Mary (i.e. the virgin birth).

We need to look back at what God had said in the Garden as part of the curse on the serpent (when it's Satan against humanity) that it would be the seed of a woman that the Savior would be born and for that purpose, God had designed it in such a way that Jesus would be born from a virgin; that his bloodline would be through Mary and Mary alone.

Does that give us reason to think that Mary was sinless (as the Catholics do)? No, that's foolishness and the gospels tell us that Mary went and sacrificed (pigeons) according to the Levitical law, which was customary to do after a woman gives birth. Is she unique? She's only blessed as a human being. That's it. Does she have sin? Absolutely. Without the One that actually was born (i.e. Jesus Christ) and His death, would she be in eternal hell? Absolutely!

Why a virgin birth? Because it was necessary. It was necessary because God had said that the Savior would be a seed of a woman; which may seem to be a weird thing for Him to say from the very beginning, but that's how He would use womanhood.

On a side note (and this is for free), there is recorded in Matthew's genealogy of Joseph (the stepfather of Jesus) a man named Jeconiah (mentioned after Josiah). Jeconiah was cursed according to [Jeremiah 22:30](#).

"Thus says the LORD, 'Write this man down childless, A man who will not prosper in his days; For no man of his descendants will prosper Sitting on the throne of David Or ruling again in Judah.'"

This often causes at first glance a dilemma to many who read this genealogy since Joseph claims to be descended from the line of David and Jeconiah was clearly cursed by God to the extent that none of his (Jeconiah) descendants would

ever sit on the throne of David. How do we resolve this problem? The answer is that Jesus isn't a blood descendant of Joseph. He is a blood descendant of Mary, who in her genealogy bypasses the cursed king Jeconiah.

All of this is just indicative of God's sovereignty; it is just fascinating that God is so precise about the manner in which He causes all of these things to happen. How wonderful that He provides a means by which salvation comes through a woman. Take care to understand that we're still talking about Eve and not Mary. Eve would be delivered; she would be saved. Salvation would come to Eve in through the function of bearing children. She would become saved and would enjoy heaven. I believe Eve is there. Why? Because she was able to give birth to children and women, in general, have given birth to children and as a result, the Savior Himself was born.

That is a high and excellent statement. I think about the privilege of what womanhood can bring. Did God exclude them from the whole process of salvific and redemptive history? No. It turns out *they were the most integral part* of the whole process. Were the men that spoke God's Word, who led the temple service, who were pastors and elders in the New Testament a part as well? Absolutely, but without women, salvation could not have come. I think that's what Paul's trying to get at.

Therefore in response to those who would say, "It was Eve. She was quite deceived. She fell into transgression and that's how come we're all dying; that's how come there's sin; that's how come there's death." Paul responds by saying, "but she will be saved thru childbearing." Not merely Eve, but all the women in Ephesus and those who would follow after the things of the Lord, who "**continue in faith, love, and sanctity with self-restraint.**" That is a beautiful statement. It's a statement that says not only can women be saved, but that salvation itself, *the Savior Himself*, would be born to a woman. This is why I think Paul is draws from Genesis 3 to illustrate his point in verse 15.

It just makes sense to me. It parallels things perfectly and it makes the argument of Paul all the more potent to say women are greatly exalted in the eyes of the Lord; that they have been useful for Redemption, itself; that that was how God had designed it. It wasn't Joseph who brought us the Savior, it was Mary. It was a woman who had nothing particularly special about her. She was a human being, an excellent one; a godly woman, but nevertheless, a woman.

Concluding Remarks

We have been talking about the corporate gathered prayer, the corporate gathered community and how men are to lift up holy hands in prayer (v. 8). That is our design—our role. Women are to demonstrate an adornment that is not just external, but through the means of good works and godliness, portray the content of her heart (vv. 9-10). They are not allowed to preach or have authority over a man because God has designed them not to be the head, but to follow the head (i.e. man). That's the argument of Adam who was created first, then Eve. Also, Adam was not deceived, but it was Eve who was quite deceived and that brought transgression into the world, but through her salvation came as well.

Paul's argument is actually a beautiful one. He's saying that there is a purpose and reason to the manner and order by which we conduct the Christian service and ministry. God is not dumb. If we ever get so convoluted by the issues of our own particular local church problems and say, "There aren't enough men leaders. There aren't enough this or that, so we should find some exceptions to these guidelines." We need to stop, pause, and realize how Paul's argument was not based on the particular locale of Ephesus. It was based all the way back to the Garden. It was based on the events in the Garden before and after sin entered the world; before any kind of culture.

So what does this mean for us now? Paul is arguing that (regardless of what your culture is saying is the norm) from the very beginning, before there was even a culture, that Adam and Eve's relationship and roles were established and that God's declared salvation would come through the seed of the woman. God has ordained all things from the beginning.

Let me give you one last statement from John Piper (Author and Pastor, Bethlehem Baptist Church) in his book, *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism*:

"Confusion over the meaning of sexual personhood today is epidemic. The consequence of this confusion is not a free and happy harmony among gender-free persons relating on the basis of abstract competencies."

In other words, the results of us trying to eradicate any kind of gender distinctions, does that result in happiness? No.

"The consequence rather is more divorce, more homosexuality, more sexual abuse, more promiscuity, more social awkwardness, and more emotional distress and suicide that come with the loss of God-given identity."

He makes a strong, emphatic, and I think accurate statement. What happens if we just say, "Well, so what? That was okay back then, but we're not living in the time of Genesis. Let's wake up, this is the 21st century." What if we started to think that way and just adopt whatever new philosophy that comes our way? Would it result in more happiness, more contentment (e.g. everyone's gender free and everything's ok)? No. I think John Piper makes that strong argument that it only leads to more distress, not the greater fulfillment.

It is in pursuing and desiring and delighting in the particular manner by which God has created woman, in the way God has created man that gives us the greatest sense of accomplishment, satisfaction, and contentment in our service to the Lord. Let's close our time in prayer.

Heavenly Father,

We thank You that as we look to these verses, there are so many things, Lord, to be learned. So many things for us to contemplate and so much, Lord, that goes contrary to the age that we live in now.

And I pray that You would help to us discern carefully, to think through carefully, areas that are appropriate for us to understand; areas which Scriptures clearly forbid Lord.

And teach us, Lord, not to confuse those things; to stand where the Scripture stand and in other things, to be gracious and to delight in our freedom.

But Lord, we just praise You; that You have made men, that You have made women, and that it might be an encouragement to us to remember that our distinct roles are processed; by which, You have given us everything that is good in this world.

In fact, this is the process by which we have physical life and it is also the process by which we have inherited spiritual life as well.

So, we praise You. We praise You for the ladies, for their God-given distinctions and we praise You for the men and for what they are to do with their distinctive roles, as well.

So, as we learn those distinctions, may we just delight in the graciousness of our God for all things; making You the Author, Perfecter of faith indeed.

*In Jesus' name we pray,
Amen.*