

W o m e n i n M i n i s t r y : A n E x e g e t i c a l S t u d y o f 1 T i m o t h y 2 : 1 1 - 1 5 .

Bowman, Ann

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Women in Ministry: An Exegetical Study of 1 Timothy 2:11-15

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Since the beginning of the church on Pentecost, believers have met together for worship, fellowship, prayer, teaching, and the Lord's Supper. Both men and women have participated in these times of corporate worship. In 1 Timothy 2:11-15 Paul wrote instructions on the role of women in the worship assembly to Timothy, his apostolic representative to the church in Ephesus.

This is a difficult passage, containing unusual vocabulary (*ἀυθεντέω, ἡσυχία*), awkward grammar (the link between vv. 14 and 15), references to the Old Testament (Gen. 2 and 3) whose New Testament usage needs to be determined in 1 Timothy 2:13-14, significant theological issues (e.g., the use of *σώζω*), and a flow of thought that is not so clear as it may seem at first glance. Over the centuries scores of solutions have been offered for the various problems.

Since this is only one of many passages in the New Testament whose meanings are disputed, it is helpful to ask why some passages are so difficult to interpret. A major reason lies in the occasional nature of the Epistles.

The Occasional Nature of Epistles

The New Testament Epistles are called "occasional documents" because they were occasioned by a special circumstance on the part of either the author or, more commonly, the recipient. The circumstance might be a doctrine or a practice in need of correction, or it might be a misunderstanding in need of clarification. Thus the selection of theological issues and the extent to which they were discussed was shaped by the circumstances that occasioned a particular epistle.

Three results of the Epistles' occasional nature are noteworthy. First, while an epistle answers a problem situation, the exact nature of the problem may not be fully reported. Second, the lack of a thorough discussion of a theological issue may limit the modern-day interpreter's understanding of a passage or doctrine. Third, the Epistles were answering questions occasioned by their own circumstances, not those of a later century.¹

These three results are well illustrated in Paul's first letter to Timothy and particularly in his instructions concerning women in the worship assembly. First, the historical situation in the Ephesian church that evoked Paul's instructions in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 is not entirely clear. Historical reconstructions generally fall into three categories. Some commentators suggest that the basic problem was one of women seeking improperly to assert authority over men in the worship assembly.² Other commentators suggest that some women in the church were teaching heresy and that Paul sought to prevent them from using the worship assembly for that purpose.³ Still other interpreters suggest that Paul's prohibitions were given because women were doctrinally untaught and were thus more susceptible to false teaching.⁴

Second, in this passage Paul did not give a complete discussion of the role of women in the worship assembly. In fact nowhere did he comprehensively discuss the teaching role of women either in the worship assembly or in the larger ministry of the church. Other passages do touch briefly on their participation in the worship assembly (e.g., 1 Cor. 11:5; 14:26). But even if these and other passages are

¹ The occasional nature of the Epistles and the "task theology" they contain is discussed by Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart in *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982), 44-46, 70-71.

² James B. Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 202; Homer A. Kent, Jr., *The Pastoral Epistles*, rev. ed. (Chicago: Moody, 1982), 107-9; J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963; reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1987), 68.

³ Bruce Barron, "Putting Women in Their Place: 1 Timothy 2 and Evangelical Views of Women in Church Leadership," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 33 (December 1990): 451-59; Catherine C. Kroeger, "1 Timothy 2:12—A Classicist's View," in *Women, Authority and the Bible*, ed. Alvera Mickelson (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1986), 225-44; Philip B. Payne, "Libertarian Women in Ephesus: A Response to Douglas J. Moo's Article: '1 Timothy 2:11-15: Meaning and Significance,'" *Trinity Journal* 2 NS (1981): 183; David M. Scholer, "1 Timothy 2:9-15 and the Place of Women in the Church's Ministry," in *Women, Authority and the Bible*, p. 204.

⁴ Aida Besançon Spencer, *Beyond the Curse* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1985), 84; Richard and Joyce Boldrey, *Chauvinist or Feminist? Paul's View of Women* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1976), 62-64.

carefully integrated, the picture of how women served in the assembly and elsewhere is far from complete. Many similar unresolved issues exist, such as Paul's assertion that believers will judge both the world and angels (6:2-3), the exact method of baptism, and how certain spiritual gifts were exercised (e.g., word of wisdom and word of knowledge, 12:8), to name a few. In such issues the modern-day interpreter must be content with some limits on his or her knowledge.

Third, Paul was answering a question concerning the conduct of women in the worship assembly as it was known in the first century. He was not answering questions that are raised today, such as whom a woman should teach in Sunday school or in a parachurch training class, for these are situations that did not exist in the first century. While one possibly may draw applicable principles from this passage, the passage does not speak to these current issues directly.

The Context of 1 Timothy 2:11-15

THE PURPOSE OF 1 TIMOTHY

False teachers had arisen in Ephesus since Paul's last visit there (1 Tim. 1:3-11; 4:1-5; cf. Acts 20:17-38). Quite possibly they were from within the church and may have included recognized elders (Acts 20:29-30).⁵ Paul was eager to refute them (1 Tim. 1:3-11; 6:3-10) and to defend against further attacks through the teaching of correct doctrine (4:6, 13-16; 6:2, 17-18), through promoting godly living of both leaders (3:1-13; 5:17-25; 6:11-16) and laity (5:1-16; 6:1-2, 17-19), and through ensuring correct church practice (2:1-15; 3:1-13).

Stated formally, Paul instructed Timothy to refute false teachers, to teach the truth of the gospel, to ensure proper conduct in the worship assembly, to select qualified church leaders, and to promote godly behavior and motives on the part of both leaders and laity so that Timothy might fully carry out his responsibilities as apostolic representative to the church in Ephesus.

PROBLEMS IN THE EPHESIAN WORSHIP ASSEMBLY

Public prayer for all. Certain problems had arisen in the worship assembly, and Paul addressed four of them in chapter 2. He be-

⁵ Gordon D. Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1984), 7-8, 39-40. The false teachers' identity as Ephesian elders is supported by their self-designation as "teachers of the Law" (1:7), which was an elder's responsibility (5:17; cf. 3:2); by the excommunication of Hymenaeus and Alexander by Paul (1:19-20) rather than by the church (2 Thess. 3:14; 1 Cor. 5:1-5); and by Paul's emphasis on the elders' qualifications (1 Tim. 3:1-7) and discipline (5:19-25).

gan by explaining the necessity of offering public prayers for all individuals, especially those in positions of governmental authority, so that the church might have a peaceful life (2:1-2). Such prayer has intrinsic excellence and is acceptable before God, who desires all persons to be saved (vv. 3-4) and has made salvation available through Christ's saving work on the cross (vv. 5-7).

Men with cleansed consciences. Next Paul instructed the men in each of the home churches in Ephesus to pray with a cleansed conscience, free from the stain of interpersonal conflicts (v. 8). Though it was not uncommon for believers to pray with raised hands,⁶ Paul's focus was not on the physical act but on the heart attitude. "Holy hands" serves as a figure of speech representing a cleansed conscience.⁷ In particular, cleansing was especially needed from a quarrelsome spirit ("without wrath and dissension"). Throughout the Pastoral Epistles, Paul gave admonitions against contentiousness to overseers/elders (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7), men generally (1 Tim. 2:8), deacons (3:8), Timothy (2 Tim. 2:24), and believers in general (Titus 3:2). Paul's exhortation to the men in 1 Timothy 2:8 would indicate that a quarrelsome spirit was a sin the men of Ephesus must take special care to avoid.

Women dressed appropriately. In 1 Timothy 2:9-10 Paul addressed a third issue needing correction in the Ephesian worship assemblies, namely, women's adornment. He exhorted the women to adorn themselves both with modest apparel (v. 9a) and with a modest attitude (v. 9b). By contrast, they should not adorn themselves with ostentatious attire (v. 9c) but, as women who profess godliness, they should adorn themselves with good deeds worthy of eschatological reward (v. 10).

Two reasons for Paul's directive are possible. First, some women may have been dressing in a showy, possibly sensual manner that, while congruent with their former, pagan lifestyle, was totally

⁶ This was a Jewish custom (1 Kings 8:22; Pss. 28:2; 63:4; 141:2; 143:6; Lam. 3:41; 2 Macc. 14:34; Philo, *de Hum.* 2) that Christians also practiced at times (1 Clem. 2:3; 29:1; Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 7:7; Tertullian, *Apol.* 30; *de Orat.* 11). A more complete discussion and bibliography may be found in C. Spicq, *Les Epîtres Pastorales*, 4th rev. ed., 2 vols. (Paris: Gabalda, 1969), 1:372-73.

⁷ The term translated "holy" (*ἅγιος*) carries the idea of "devout," "holy," and "pleasing to God" in both secular and Christian writing of the period. While the phrase "holy hands" is unique in the New Testament, the idea is present in Genesis 20:5; Job 17:9; 22:30; Ps. 24:3-4; and James 4:8. The general idea is that of a cleansed conscience (Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, trans. Philip Buttolph and Adela Yarbro [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972], p. 44, ns. 2, 3; *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, s.v. "ἅγιος," by F. Hauck 5 [1967]:492; Spicq, *Les Epîtres Pastorales*, 373-74).

inappropriate for the church of God.⁸ Second, and more probable, some women may have been dressing in a way that reflected their superior social status.⁹ The Ephesian church included some who were wealthy (1 Tim. 6:17-19), but the majority would certainly have been from lower socioeconomic strata and such ostentatious attire could have been a barrier to their sharing in the life of the church (cf. 1 Cor. 11:20-21). Whichever reason is correct, Paul made it clear that a woman's outward adornment is not the primary issue in God's eyes. Instead, He is interested in a godly attitude that issues forth in good works worthy of heavenly reward.

The Exegesis of 1 Timothy 2:11-15

Paul then turned to a fourth area that concerned him as the Ephesians met together for worship. He desired the women to learn with an attitude of quiet submissiveness rather than to be involved improperly in teaching and leading the men in the assembly.

VERSE 11

Addressed to women generally. The group of individuals under discussion here is women generally; that is, this directive is not limited to wives. Three factors make this clear. First, in the preceding verses (2:8-10) Paul directed men (*ἀνδρας*) to pray and women (*γυναῖκας*) to adorn themselves properly. Since it is unlikely that these instructions are limited to husbands and wives, it is unlikely that verses 11-15 are limited to wives. Second, in this context Paul was viewing men and women as part of a worshiping community, not as family members (as he did, e.g., in Eph. 5:22-33).¹⁰ Third, had Paul been speaking of the husband-wife relationship, a definite article or possessive pronoun before *ἀνδρός* in verse 12 might have been expected (as in Eph. 5:22-25, 28-29, 31, 33).¹¹

Directive to learn. Paul directed the women in the worship assembly to learn (*μανθάνω*). This verb is used seven times in the Pastorals; in this verse it carries the connotation of learning through

⁸ Scholer, "1 Timothy 2:9-15 and the Place of Women in the Church's Ministry," 201-2.

⁹ Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 66; P. Dornier, *Les Épîtres Pastorales* (Paris: Gabalda, 1969), 55.

¹⁰ Herman Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*, trans. John R. DeWitt (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 462, n. 107.

¹¹ Douglas J. Moo, "1 Timothy 2:11-15: Meaning and Significance," *Trinity Journal* 1 NS (1980): 64.

instruction (cf. 2 Tim. 3:7, 14; John 7:15; 1 Cor. 14:31).¹² Paul assumed that women both could and would learn. Since Paul later noted that the Ephesian false teachers had gained influence over some of the women (e.g., 2 Tim. 3:6-7), it seems he knew it was important that they be well grounded in the Scriptures.

Manner of learning. The manner in which women were to learn is twofold. First, they should learn "in quietness" (*ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ*). The word *ἡσυχία* and its related forms occur only 11 times in the New Testament. The meaning of *ἡσυχία* ranges from "silence" (Acts 22:2) to "rest, quietness" (1 Tim. 2:2; 2 Thess. 3:12).¹³ The translation "quietness" is best here, since it would have been normal for women to speak in the worship assembly (1 Cor. 11:5; 14:26).¹⁴ The next phrase, "in all submissiveness," seems to underscore the idea that Paul's emphasis in this passage is on the attitude of heart that is to accompany learning.

Second, Paul directed the women to learn "in all submissiveness" (*ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ*). Clark explains that "subordination extends beyond obedience to commands to also include respectfulness and receptiveness to direction."¹⁵ The question then arises concerning to what or to whom a woman is to be submissive. There are at least three possibilities. First, it may mean that a woman is to be submissive to her husband. While this truth is taught elsewhere (Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18; Titus 2:5), such a meaning is unlikely here, where the focus is on men

¹² *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, s.v. "μυθῶν," by K. Rengstorf, 4:410; Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 2d ed., rev. F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 490.

¹³ Moo notes that these meanings occur with equal frequency in the Septuagint, Josephus, and Philo ("1 Timothy 2:11-15: Meaning and Significance," 64, n. 15). See the discussions in Stephen B. Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Books, 1980), 195; in Spencer, *Beyond the Curse*, 80; and in J. Keir Howard, "Neither Male nor Female: An Examination of the Status of Women in the New Testament," *Evangelical Quarterly* 55 (January 1983): 31-42. Clark and Howard argue for the meaning "quietness," and Spencer argues for the meaning "silence." The word *σιγῶν* means "remain silent," as seen in 1 Corinthians 14:28, 34.

¹⁴ For example in 1 Corinthians 14:26-40 Paul gave instructions to both men and women concerning vocal participation in the assembly. Fee has pointed out that Paul used the vocative "brothers" (*ἀδελφοί*) many times in 1 Corinthians and other epistles. Women were certainly part of the worship community and would have been included in his instructions to the "brothers." Philippians 4:1-3 is especially noteworthy because Paul refers to "my beloved brethren" and then immediately addresses two women by name in the next sentence (Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987], 52, n. 22; 690).

¹⁵ Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ*, 92.

and women as worshipers. Second, Paul may have meant that a woman is to be submissive to the church elders.¹⁶ Since false teachers were leading believers astray, submission to church elders may have been part of Paul's solution to that problem. A third possibility, closely related to the second, is that women are to submit themselves to sound doctrine.¹⁷ Either of the last two views provides an adequate explanation. A combination of these two views is also possible: women were to submit themselves only to those elders who taught sound doctrine.

Summary. Women in the worship assembly are to receive instruction with an attitude of quiet receptivity and submissiveness. The emphasis here seems to be not so much on literal silence as on an inner attitude in which the spirit is at rest in submitting to the teaching (and the teachers) in the assembly.

VERSE 12

By means of an example of contrasting behavior, Paul reinforced his call for women to receive instruction in quietness. They were neither to teach nor to have authority over a man in the worship assembly. The initial "but" (*δέ*, untranslated in NIV) shows that the following situation contrasts with what precedes it.

Meaning of οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω. Paul continued his instruction by stating, "I do not permit" (*οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω*). Some writers suggest that Paul used this term to express a personal preference.¹⁸ Other interpreters argue that the statement is to be considered binding on the church.¹⁹ The latter view is preferable for two reasons. The first reason concerns the use of *ἐπιτρέπω* in 1 Corinthians 14:34. There Paul stated that—in the situation envisioned in that verse—women were not permitted to speak; and in verse 37 he underscored the importance of this injunction by saying, "The things which I write to you are the Lord's commandment" (a reference to 1 Cor. 14:26-36,

¹⁶ Walter Lock, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1924), 32; Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 108.

¹⁷ Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 47.

¹⁸ Walter Kaiser, "Paul, Women and the Church," *Worldwide Challenge* (September 1976), 11. He suggests, but offers no supporting evidence, that this is used in the same sense as Paul's statement that "I wish that all men were even as I myself," that is, unmarried (1 Cor. 7:7). A more substantial attempt to limit the meaning of *ἐπιτρέπω* to personal preference is offered by Payne, "Libertarian Women in Ephesus," 170-73.

¹⁹ George A. Knight III, *The Role Relationship of Men and Women*, rev. ed. (Chicago: Moody, 1977), 19, n. 4; Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ*, 199-200.

which includes his directive in v. 34).²⁰ Second, Paul was most probably using his own personal authority to back up the prohibition of 1 Timothy 2:12 in the same way he did elsewhere. In 1 Corinthians 11:16, for example, he used his personal authority as the basis for reaffirming an approved practice that was common throughout first-century churches.

Paul wrote that women should not be involved in two aspects of the public worship assembly: They are neither "to teach or exercise authority over a man." In this much-disputed statement several points need to be clarified.

Meaning of διδάσκειν. One issue concerns the meaning of the term "to teach" (*διδάσκειν*). The verb *διδάσκω* and its cognates are the most common terms for teaching in the New Testament. The word refers almost exclusively to public instruction or teaching of groups.²¹ In the New Testament a teacher is one who systematically teaches or expounds the Word of God and who gives instruction in the Old Testament and apostolic teaching (1 Cor. 4:17; 2 Tim. 2:2).²² The spiritual gift of teaching enables individuals to grasp revelation that already has been given and to communicate this truth effectively to others. In addition there is a strong applicational aspect to the ministry of teachers as they demonstrate to their hearers the implications of God's inspired Word for daily living (cf. Matt. 28:19-20).²³

²⁰ The context of 1 Corinthians 14:34 is concern for orderly behavior in the Corinthian church. Paul had already enjoined silence on the one who spoke in tongues without interpretation (v. 28) and the one prophesying who was interrupted by a second person with a prophecy (v. 30). In 1 Corinthians 14:34 he described a third situation in which a group of people were told to be silent in the worship assembly. Various interpretations of this passage abound, but the context (regulation of inspired utterance in the worship assembly) indicates that it may refer to women judging prophecies in that setting. For recent discussions of possible views see J. D. G. Dunn, "The Responsible Congregation (1 Co 14, 26-40)," in *Charisma und Agape (1 Ko 12-14)*, ed. Lorenzo De Lorenzi (Rome: St Paul vor den Mavern, 1983), 227, 231, 243-44; E. Earle Ellis, "The Silenced Wives of Corinth (1 Cor. 14:34-5)," in *New Testament Textual Criticism: Its Significance for Exegesis*, ed. Eldon Jay Epp and Gordon D. Fee (Oxford: Clarendon, 1981), 213-20; Wayne Grudem, "Prophecy—Yes, but Teaching—No: Paul's Consistent Advocacy of Women's Participation without Governing Authority," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 30 (March 1987): 20-23.

²¹ Roy B. Zuck, "Greek Words for Teach," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 122 (April-June 1965): 159-60. He notes that in only three of nearly 100 occurrences does the word refer to the teaching of individuals: John 8:28; Romans 2:21; Revelation 2:14.

²² Harold Mare, "Prophet and Teacher in the New Testament Period," *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society* 9 (Summer 1966): 146; Floyd V. Filson, "The Christian Teacher in the First Century," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 60 (1941): 324.

²³ *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, s.v. "διδάσκω," by K. Rengstorf, 2:146; idem, s.v. "διδάσκαλος," 2:158; Filson, "The Christian Teacher in the First Century," 318; John F. Walvoord, "Contemporary Issues in the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit, Part IV," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 130 (October-December 1973): 316.

Meaning of αὐθεντεῖν. The term αὐθεντεῖν is variously translated as "to have/exercise/usurp authority." It is used only here in the New Testament and is rare in extant Greek literature. While scholars continue to debate its meaning, three points are relevant to the present discussion. First, the rarity of the verb and its cognates, especially before and during the New Testament period, make it difficult to reach an absolutely certain conclusion on its New Testament meaning.²⁴ Second, it seems significant that Paul used this less common term rather than the more common terms ἐξουσία ("authority") and ἐξουσιάζω ("to have authority"). The choice of the term αὐθεντεῖν would indicate that he had a special nuance of meaning in mind.²⁵ Third, the sense of "have or exercise authority"²⁶ and the sense of "domineer or usurp authority"²⁷ both seem to be possible meanings for αὐθεντεῖν during the New Testament period.

The meaning "to exercise authority" may be preferable, since the six clear usages of the word cited by Knight consistently support this meaning. He demonstrates that this is a legitimate meaning for the word when the New Testament was written.²⁸

²⁴ Significant recent studies include the following: George W. Knight III, "AYΘENTEΩ in Reference to Women in 1 Timothy 2:12," *New Testament Studies* 30 (January 1984): 143-57; C. D. Osburn, "AYΘENTEΩ (1 Timothy 2:12)," *Restoration Quarterly* 25 (1982): 1-12; Catherine C. Kroeger, "Ancient Heresies and a Strange Greek Verb," *Reformed Journal* 29 (March 1979): 12-15; Armin J. Panning, "AYΘENTEIN—A Word Study," *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* 78 (1981): 185-91; Kroeger, "1 Timothy 2:12—A Classicist's View," 229-32; Walter L. Liefeld, "Response," in *Women, Authority and the Bible*, 244-48; Philip B. Payne, "Οὐδέ in 1 Timothy 2:12" (Paper presented at the Evangelical Theological Society Annual Meeting, November 21, 1986), 8-10.

Knight's article is a model word study, but since it is based on only the few occurrences of the term cited by Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich, and Danker, in *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, it is necessarily incomplete. This is not to say that Knight's conclusions are incorrect; it is simply to say that the same high quality of study now needs to be done on the more than 90 occurrences of the verb and its cognates that are available through the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* project of the University of California at Irvine.

Kroeger has argued for the meaning "to proclaim oneself the author or originator of something." In the context of 1 Timothy 2:12 this means that women are not to teach "a mythology similar to that of the Gnostics in which Eve predated Adam and was his creator" (232). Liefeld's response points out some obvious problems (e.g., methodological problems such as lack of dates and full contexts for sources, and a questionable reconstruction of the socioreligious background of the passage ["Response," 245-48]). The earlier article by Kroeger, which argued for the meaning "to engage in fertility practices" (14), has been refuted in the detailed article by Panning.

²⁵ Scholer, "1 Timothy 2:9-15 and the Place of Women in the Church's Ministry," 205.

²⁶ Knight, "AYΘENTEΩ in Reference to Women," 150-53.

²⁷ Osburn, "AYΘENTEΩ (1 Timothy 2:12)," 2-8.

²⁸ Knight, "AYΘENTEΩ in Reference to Women," 144-53.

One command or two. Another issue involves the nature of the grammatical construction in which the two infinitives are joined by *οὐδέ* ("or"). Was Paul giving one prohibition or two? If one, the two infinitives form a hendiadys whose meaning would be either "to teach authoritatively"²⁹ or "to teach a man in a domineering way"³⁰ (depending on the meaning assigned to *αὐθεντεῖν*). However, an analysis of the instances in the New Testament in which *οὐδέ* joins two infinitives shows that two separate, although closely related, ideas are meant.³¹ Thus the best rendering of the construction is "to teach [a man] or to exercise authority over a man."

But how do teaching and exercising authority relate to one another? A central issue in verses 11-15 is authority and submission. It seems that teaching is a subset of holding authority. Paul wrote about a situation in which some women were violating God's pattern of authority and submission, which was made clear in the pattern of creation (as vv. 13-14 demonstrate). Some women in Ephesus were violating God's pattern by teaching men in the worship assembly.

Paul completed this section (vv. 11-12) with the phrase, "but to be in quietness." He used the same phrase in verse 11 (*ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ*, "in quietness") both to provide a positive contrast to the negative prohibition in the first half of the verse and to underscore the positive directive in verse 11 that women should learn in a quiet and submissive manner.³²

²⁹ Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective*, 201.

³⁰ Payne, "Οὐδέ in 1 Timothy 2:12," 1.

³¹ The analysis by Payne, while helpful, does not compare instances of the actual grammatical construction of infinitive—*οὐδέ*—infinitive. This construction is rare in the New Testament, occurring only in Acts 16:21 and 1 Timothy 2:12. In addition, an identical construction occurs in Revelation 5:3 in which *οὔτε* rather than *οὐδέ* is used. (John most probably used *οὔτε* for stylistic reasons, since the compound subject of the sentence uses *οὐδέ* correlatively.) Acts 16:21 reads, "[These men] are proclaiming customs which it is not lawful for us to accept or to observe [*παραδέχασθαι οὐδέ ποιεῖν*], being Romans." Revelation 5:3 states, "And no one in heaven, or [*οὐδέ*] on the earth, or [*οὐδέ*] under the earth, was able to open the book, or to look into it [*ἀνοῖξαι τὸ βιβλίον οὔτε βλέπειν αὐτό*]." In both verses the infinitives are closely related, but are not identical. To accept customs or to acknowledge them as correct and to practice those customs are two different things. To open a book and to look into that book are two separate activities. In 1 Timothy 2:12 the ideas of teaching and exercising authority are likewise closely related, but they denote two activities rather than one.

³² The phrase "in quietness" actually serves as an *inclusio*, bracketing the chiasm formed by the two verses. The ABB'A' pattern suggested by Fung is simpler and more completely chiasmic than the ABCB'A' pattern favored by Moo (Ronald Y. K. Fung, "Ministry in the New Testament," in *The Church in the Bible and the World*, ed. D. A. Carson [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987], 336, n. 186; Moo, "1 Timothy 2:11-15: Meaning and Significance," 64). In Fung's model the two positive statements flank the two negative ones, with the emphasis falling on *ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ*, as seen on the next page.

Summary. In verse 12, then, Paul explained that women are permitted neither to teach men nor to exercise authority over men in the worship assembly. Instead, as he had already directed in verse 11, they are to receive instruction with an inner attitude of quietness and submission to the truth of God's Word (and His chosen teachers).

VERSE 13

Paul continued his discussion by giving two reasons why he instructed women in the worship assembly to learn in a quiet and submissive manner rather than to hold a position of teaching and exercising authority over a man. Though it is grammatically possible for the *γάρ* ("for") which begins verse 13 to be either explanatory or causal, the latter sense is preferable for two reasons. First, the explanatory use of *γάρ* is rare, and definite contextual evidence would be needed to argue for an explanatory sense.³³ Second, it is usual in Paul's letters for *γάρ* to be causal when it follows a verb or idea of command or prohibition.³⁴

Reference to Genesis 2 and 3. In verses 13 and 14 Paul referred to the Genesis accounts of the creation and Fall of mankind. This is clear both from the general content of each verse and from the specific verbal links with the Septuagint version of Genesis 2 and 3. The word *ἐπλασθη* ("formed") in verse 13 corresponds to *ἐπλασε(ν)* in Genesis 2:7, 15. In 1 Timothy 2:14 the word *ἠπατήθη* ("deceived") corresponds to the word *ἠπάτησε* in Genesis 3:14. It is important to note that Paul was not simply referring to two verses taken from Genesis 2 and 3. Instead, he was using a common rabbinic method of referring to

A γυνὴ ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ μαθανέτω ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ

B διδάσκειν δὲ γυναικὶ οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω

B' οὐδὲ αὐθεντεῖν ἀνδρός,

A' ἀλλ' εἶναι ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ.

³³ Robertson is nearly alone in taking the primary meaning of *γάρ* as something other than causal. Dana and Mantey and Blass and Debrunner consider its primary use to be causal; Zerwick's grammar and Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich, and Danker offer only a few instances in which its sense is not causal. Moo offers a detailed summary of information from the grammars ("1 Tim. 2:11-15: A Rejoinder," *Trinity Journal* 2 NS [1981]: 202-3). Also see H. E. Dana and J. R. Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (New York: Macmillan, 1927), 243; F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. Robert W. Funk (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), § 452; and Maximilian Zerwick, *Biblical Greek Illustrated by Examples* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Press, 1963), § 173.

³⁴ Moo, "1 Tim. 2:11-15: A Rejoinder," 203. He offers 21 instances in the Pastorals alone in which this sequence occurs: 1 Timothy 3:13; 4:5, 8, 16; 5:4, 11, 15; 2 Timothy 1:7; 2:7, 16; 3:6; 4:3, 6, 10, 11, 15; Titus 1:10; 2:11; 3:3, 9, 12.

the Old Testament, a method known as summary citation.³⁵ That is, he used the summary statement in 1 Timothy 2:13 to point the reader to the entire pericope describing the creation of man and woman (Gen. 2:4-24), and in 1 Timothy 2:14 he referred back to the entire pericope detailing the Fall (Gen. 3:1-25). Paul was not limiting his focus to two specific, isolated thoughts; rather, he was drawing on two complete narratives.³⁶

Chronological primacy. Paul was a Pharisee (Acts 23:6; 26:5; Phil. 3:5) who had been trained by Gamaliel the Elder (Acts 22:3).³⁷ The apostle freely employed rabbinic methods of Old Testament interpretation commonly used in his day.³⁸ In typical rabbinic fashion, Paul was making an analogical application based on the Genesis text.³⁹ He was stating that according to the Genesis 2 account, Adam

35 If Paul had focused on specific verses taken from the Genesis 2 and 3 account, he would probably have quoted or closely paraphrased specific verses and likely would have used one of the common introductory formulas he used elsewhere. To name only a few of these formulas: "so also it is written" (*οὕτως καὶ γέγραπται*) in 1 Corinthians 15:45; "as it was written" (*καθὼς γέγραπται*) in 1 Corinthians 1:31; 2:9; 2 Corinthians 8:15; 9:9; "then will come about the saying which is written" (*τότε γενήσεται ὁ λόγος ὁ γεγραμμένος*) in 1 Corinthians 15:54; "for the Scripture says" (*λέγει γὰρ ἡ γραφή*) in 1 Timothy 5:18. A thorough listing of introductory formulas may be found in Bruce Metzger, "The Formulas Introducing Quotations of Scripture in the New Testament and the Mishnah," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 70 (1951): 297-307; Joseph A. Fitzmeyer, "The Use of Explicit Old Testament Quotations in Qumran Literature and in the New Testament," *New Testament Studies* 7 (1960-61): 299-305. Also see Joseph Bonsirven, *Exégèse rabbinique et exégèse paulinienne* (Paris: Beauchesne et ses fils, 1939), 264-65.

36 An example of a single statement recalling an entire pericope is Luke 17:32, "Remember Lot's wife." To understand Jesus' implied warning, one must recall the circumstances that caused Sodom's destruction (Gen. 18:22-19:11), the flight of Lot and his family from the city (19:12-25), and the sin of Lot's wife and its results (vv. 17, 26).

37 F. F. Bruce, *New Testament History* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1969), 237-39; Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.-A.D. 135)*, rev. and ed. Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, and Matthew Black (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1979), 2:367-68.

38 Many studies have been done on this topic, including Bonsirven, *Exégèse rabbinique et exégèse paulinienne*; Dan Cohn-Sherbok, "Paul and Rabbinic Exegesis," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 35 (1982): 117-32; E. Earle Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* (1957; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981), 38-54; Richard N. Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 104-32; Anthony J. Hanson, *Studies in Paul's Technique and Theology* (London: SPCK, 1974), 136-257; H. J. Schoeps, *Paul*, trans. Harold Knight (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), 37-43.

39 An example of analogical application occurs in 1 John 3:11-15. In teaching the church to "love one another," John used an analogy from Genesis 4 to strengthen his point: Believers should not be "as Cain, who was of the evil one, and slew his brother." He later wrote that "every one who hates his brother is a murderer." This is clearly derived from Genesis, but Genesis does not specifically teach that believers who hate fellow believers are murderers. Rather John built an analogy here. God exhorted Cain to do well, but instead he murdered his (physical) brother. John's analogy is that believers are spiritual brothers who are exhorted by God to love one another. When they hate one another, it is as if they have committed murder.

was first created; and the implication is that Adam's chronological primacy in creation carried with it some degree of authority.

The Genesis 2 text does not spell out the manner in which this is true, but the Old Testament concept of primogeniture may provide some explanation. In the Old Testament the firstborn son received a number of specific privileges. First, he succeeded his father as head of the family and leader of the family worship (Deut. 21:15-17).⁴⁰ Second, he received a "double portion" of the inheritance (v. 17). When Paul appealed to Adam's chronological priority, he was possibly asserting that Adam's status as the oldest carried with it the leadership fitting for a firstborn son.⁴¹

Summary. Paul was not saying that the Genesis account teaches the ontological superiority of the male over the female. Nor was he stating that his prohibition on women teaching is found in the Genesis account. As Ross has noted, "His ruling would stand as authoritative whether he connected it to creation or not; but he shows how his instruction harmonizes with the design of the Creator in this world."⁴² The unstated application of his argument, then, is that just as in creation the final authority rested with the man, so in the church this order should be maintained.

VERSE 14

In verse 14 Paul used the same line of argumentation, that is, argument by analogy. In this case, however, he referred to the Genesis 3 account of the Fall of mankind. First Timothy 2:14 states, "And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being quite deceived, fell into transgression." In this verse Paul was not suggesting that women are more easily deceived than men or that women are less intelligent. Both Scripture and history witness repeatedly to the ease with which both men and women may be deceived, especially with regard to doctrine.⁴³ Paul was actually referring here to the entire account of the Fall, and so he used the word "deceived" to draw attention to the connection with Genesis 3.

⁴⁰ The rights of the firstborn son are clearly explained by Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 2 vols. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961), 1:41-42, 53. The rabbis affirmed this understanding of the firstborn son's rights in the Mishnah (m. *Baba Bathra* 8:4, 5; m. *Bechoroth* 8:1, 9, 10).

⁴¹ Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective*, 207.

⁴² Allen P. Ross, "The Participation of Women in Ministry and Service," in *Exegesis and Exposition* 4 (1989): 77.

⁴³ For example warnings against deception by false teachers are often given to believers (e.g., Rom. 16:17-18; Eph. 5:6; Col. 2:8; 2 Thess. 2:3). Warnings against self-deception are also issued (e.g., 1 Cor. 3:18; James 1:26).

Reversal of roles. In Genesis 3, the serpent tempted the woman to disobey God by eating of the fruit that had been forbidden to her. The serpent deceived her and she ate. Immediately after her own fall into sin she offered the forbidden fruit to her husband. He willingly ate and also fell into sin. In this scene a reversal of roles has occurred.⁴⁴ The ultimate responsibility before God rested with Adam, who allowed himself to be knowingly led astray by his wife.

That God considered Adam ultimately responsible, rather than Eve, is clear not only from Romans 5:12, which states that "through one man sin entered into the world," but also by the fact that the all-knowing God first asked not Eve but Adam to explain his actions. Further, in Genesis 3:17, God told Adam that the curse would come on the earth "because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it.'" The term "listened to" means "obeyed" in this case, as it often does in the Hebrew Old Testament.⁴⁵

Summary. Paul's point is that this role reversal that caused such devastation at the beginning must not be repeated in the church. The woman must not be the one who leads the man in obedience to her. Thus when the teaching of the Word of God in the assembly occurs, a qualified male elder should fill the role of teacher.

VERSE 15

Possible interpretations. Many interpretations have been suggested for verse 15.⁴⁶ These include the following. (1) Women will be

⁴⁴ Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 109. Also see Ross, "The Participation of Women in Ministry and Service," 78. It should be noted that while Paul in his analogy focused on the reversal of roles, the Genesis text simply states the fact that Adam obeyed his wife by eating the fruit God had commanded him not to eat (Gen. 3:17; see n. 46 below). Genesis 3 focuses on the couple's blatant, rebellious act of sin as they defied the God who had created them and sought only their highest benefit. They sinned and fell, both as individuals and as a pair: "The eyes of both of them were opened and they knew that they were naked" (v. 7). See Mary K. Evans, *Man and Woman in the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1983), 18.

⁴⁵ Brown, Driver, and Briggs classify the expression *שָׁמַעְתָּ לְקוֹל אִשְׁתְּךָ* ("you listened to the voice") in Genesis 3:17 with other texts meaning "obey," such as Exodus 15:26 and Judges 2:20 (Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, eds., *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* [1907; reprint, Oxford: Clarendon, 1977], 1034). Harris, Archer, and Waltke give it the meaning "listen to" (along with verses such as 1 Kings 22:19; Ps. 81:11 [12, Heb.]; Prov. 12:15) and state that "this usage shades into that of 'to obey,'" as in Exodus 24:7; Nehemiah 9:16; Isaiah 42:24; and Jeremiah 35:18 (R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* [Chicago: Moody, 1980], 938). Also see Allen P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), 147.

⁴⁶ The most comprehensive discussions, with evaluations of strengths and weaknesses of various views, may be found in Moo, "1 Timothy 2:11-15: Meaning and Significance," 70-73; Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 112-17; and Spicq, *Les Epîtres Pastorales*, 382-84.

delivered (physically) through childbirth.⁴⁷ (2) Women will be saved (spiritually) even though they must bear physical children.⁴⁸ (3) Women will be saved (spiritually) through the Childbearing (i.e., the birth of Christ).⁴⁹ (4) Women will be saved (spiritually) equally with men through fulfilling their God-given role in the home just as men fulfill theirs in public church leadership.⁵⁰ (5) Women will be kept safe from seizing men's roles in the worship assembly by fulfilling their God-given role in the home.⁵¹ (6) Women will be saved (spiritually, with the focus on eschatological salvation) through faithfulness to their proper role, exemplified in motherhood.⁵²

⁴⁷ C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom-Book of New Testament Greek*, 2d ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 56; H. A. Ironside, *Addresses on the First and Second Epistles of Timothy* (New York: Loizeaux Brothers, 1947), 72; E. K. Simpson, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954), 24. This view is proven incorrect by the many godly women who have died in childbirth over the centuries. The unacceptable implication of this view is that any woman who dies in childbirth is ungodly.

⁴⁸ E. F. Scott, *The Pastoral Epistles* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1936), p. 28. The implication here is that childbearing is not a consequence of the Fall and thus inherently sinful (contra the false teachers, 1 Tim. 4:3); rather it is a worthy calling. This view has three problems. (1) It requires a rare use of *διὰ* with the genitive: "even though," rather than either instrumentality or attendant circumstance. (2) Contextually the focus of the passage is not on bearing children but on the proper role of women in the worship assembly. (3) This view limits the meaning of *τεκνογονία* to the act of birth (see the discussion below on the meaning of *τεκνογονία*).

⁴⁹ This position is argued most ably by Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 114-17. Also see J. Oliver Buswell, *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion*, 2 vols. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962), 1:284, n. 26. Against this view it may be noted that the passage as a whole is about women in general, and not just one woman (Mary as the "new Eve"). Also the general thrust of the passage is women's role in the worship assembly, not Christ's birth. Further, if Christ's birth were what Paul wished to describe, "he could hardly have chosen a more obscure or ambiguous way of saying it" (Donald Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles: An Introduction and Commentary* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957], 78).

⁵⁰ N. J. D. White, "The First and Second Epistles to Timothy," in *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, ed. W. R. Nicoll, 4 vols. (reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951), 110. The underlying idea here seems to be that, despite what happened in the Fall, women will still experience spiritual salvation; they need only to fulfill their role in the home. While it is true that *both* women and men will be saved despite the Fall, this view fails to understand the analogical argument Paul was making in verses 13 and 14 (see explanation above) and instead focuses on the fact rather than on the nature of the sin in the Garden (i.e., that their sin of disobedience to God's command included a reversal of God-ordained roles).

⁵¹ S. Jebb, "A Suggested Interpretation of 1 Ti 2:15," *Expository Times* 81 (1969-70): 221-22; Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective*, 222-23. While this view accurately focuses on the nature of the sin in the Garden (i.e., Adam and Eve's disobedience included a reversal of roles), it fails to give the verb *σώζω* its usual sense of spiritual salvation and instead makes it refer to deliverance ("kept safe").

⁵² Moo, "1 Timothy 2:11-15; Meaning and Significance," 71-73; Fung, "Ministry in the New Testament," 203. Also see Spicq, *Les Épîtres Pastorales*, 383-84.

An analysis of these six interpretive statements reveals that four key grammatical and lexical issues are involved in understanding this verse. These are the meaning of *σωθήσεται* ("she shall be saved"), the force of *διὰ* ("through"), the force of *τῆς* ("the") before *τεκνογονίας* ("childbearing"), and the meaning and use of *τεκνογονίας*. An interpretation that satisfies the grammatical and lexical problems and that also fits the larger context is the sixth option. That is, women will enter into eschatological salvation, with its accompanying rewards, through faithfulness to their proper role, exemplified in motherhood and in godly living generally.

Role of δέ. The verse begins, literally, "Yet she shall be saved through childbearing." The *δέ* ("yet") is a mild adversative that serves, first, to provide a contrast with the preceding verse, in which Paul referred to the results of the reversal of roles in Genesis 3. The *δέ* also introduces a final, concluding statement about the results of women fulfilling their God-given roles.

Meaning of σώζω. The verb *σώζω* in the New Testament may refer to physical deliverance from some peril (Matt. 14:30; 27:40; Acts 27:20), to physical healing (Mark 5:34; Luke 17:19; 18:42; Acts 4:9; 14:9), to deliverance from demonization (Luke 8:36), and, very commonly, to spiritual salvation. In this latter sense salvation has an essential eschatological component regardless of whether that is the focus of a particular Scripture passage.⁵³ Salvation may be pictured as a trajectory that has justification as its beginning point and sanctification as the route of the trajectory.⁵⁴ Both justification and sanctification will be consummated at a future time when believers will be in their glorified state.⁵⁵

Justification and sanctification have both a present and a future aspect. Justification begins the moment a person receives Christ as Savior, but this vindication is consummated in the believer's end-

⁵³ Floyd V. Filson, *St. Paul's Conception of Recompense* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrich, 1931), 141-42.

⁵⁴ Karl P. Donfried, "Justification and Last Judgment in Paul," *Interpretation* 30 (1976): 144.

⁵⁵ Glorification is the final, concluding phase of salvation. It is commonly associated with a point in time that may be either the believers' transition from earth to glory (2 Cor. 5:8) or the return of Christ (Col. 3:4). In their glorified state believers are at last fully conformed to the image of Christ (Rom. 8:28-29) and they receive their resurrection bodies (1 Cor. 15:38-50; 2 Cor. 5:1-5; Phil. 1:21). It is also in this state that the final judgment of the believers' works will occur and rewards will be given (Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10). For further discussion see Bernard Ramm, *Them He Glorified* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963), 62-136; and Charles A. A. Scott, *Christianity according to St. Paul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), 238-39.

time glorification (Rom. 5:9-10; cf. 8:31-39).⁵⁶ Sanctification, which begins at the moment of justification and is dependent on it, is a positional truth with an experiential component. Positionally, Christians belong to God; they are set apart as His people (Rom. 15:16; 1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Thess. 2:13).⁵⁷ As those who have been set apart, however, they are exhorted to experience sanctification through Spirit-empowered, holy living (Rom. 6:19; Gal. 5:16; Phil. 2:12-13; Col. 1:10; 1 Thess. 4:7). As motivation to live a sanctified life, Paul wrote of the future time when believers' works will be judged and rewards will be given (Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10; cf. 1 Cor. 3:10-15).⁵⁸ The goal of sanctification is eschatological: to be presented to God in complete purity (Eph. 5:26-27; Col. 1:22; 1 Thess. 3:13; 5:23).⁵⁹

In 1 Timothy 2:15 Paul focused on the future aspects of a woman's salvation.⁶⁰ This is underscored by his choice of the future tense of the verb. In particular, he stressed the necessity of her consistently living a life characterized by holiness and obedience, one worthy of future rewards. In other words he was referring here to salvation as the consummation of the process of sanctification. As he did elsewhere (e.g., Col. 1:21-23; 1 Thess. 5:8-9), Paul used the hope for attaining the fullness of salvation as a motivation to faithful Christian living.⁶¹

⁵⁶ Thus Paul could confidently assert in Ephesians 2:8 that "by grace you have been saved" (*ἔστε σωσμένοι*), with the perfect periphrastic construction emphasizing both the past and present reality of an individual's salvation. At the same time, in Romans 5:9-10 he spoke of salvation—and of the aspects of justification and reconciliation in particular—as being consummated in the future: "we shall be saved" (*σωθησόμεθα*). See Ramm, *Them He Glorified*, 67-69; Donfried, "Justification and Last Judgment," 144-45. Donfried summarizes, "While salvation begins already now in the present (II Cor. 6:2), its final manifestation is still to be found in the future (Rom. 13:11; I Thess. 5:8)" (*ibid.*, p. 147).

⁵⁷ George E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 519; Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*, 261.

⁵⁸ Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, 521-22; Filson, *St. Paul's Conception of Recompense*, 98-115, 143-44; Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1981), 859-62. For discussions on eschatological rewards see Samuel L. Hoyt, "A Theological Examination of the Judgment Seat of Christ" (ThD diss., Grace Theological Seminary, 1977), 198-240, and J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1958), 219-26.

⁵⁹ Ramm, *Them He Glorified*, 69-73; Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, 520.

⁶⁰ *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, s.v. "σῶζω," by W. Foerster, 7:995.

⁶¹ Ladd explains that "Paul uses the motivation of the final attainment of salvation in the Kingdom of God as a motivation to faithful and devoted Christian living. It is significant that Paul does not use the ethical sanction in any theoretical way that leads him to discuss the possibility of losing salvation; he uses it as a sanction to moral earnestness to avoid having the gospel of grace distorted into Hellenistic enthusiasm, libertinism, or moral passivity" (*A Theology of the New Testament*, 522).

Use of δὲ. The preposition *δὲ* may refer to ultimate cause,⁶² to efficient cause, or to attendant circumstance.⁶³ Either of the latter two senses would fit here, but attendant circumstance seems preferable, given the contextual stress on the process of sanctification. More specifically, "childbearing" is one of the good works that is to be part of the lifestyle of a godly woman (cf. v. 10).

Use of the definite article. Some commentators consider the use of the definite article before "childbearing" to be par excellence (i.e., it is the most important of all instances of childbearing). This makes possible the interpretation "the Childbearing" as a reference to the birth of Christ. It is equally possible, however, to consider its use to be generic (i.e., it describes the whole process of "childbearing"),⁶⁴ and this sense fits the flow of Paul's argument better.

Meaning of τεκνογούα. The literal meaning of the noun *τεκνογούα* is certainly "childbearing." The question is whether it is used literally or figuratively in this passage. A literal view seems improbable here, since not all women bear children.⁶⁵ Further, *τεκνογούα* may refer not only to childbearing but also to child-rearing.⁶⁶ This suggests that a far more probable explanation of the term is that it serves as a synecdoche of the part for the whole. That is, childbearing represents "the general scope of activities in which a Christian woman should be involved."⁶⁷

In Paul's day this was an appropriate figure to use, since a woman would commonly be married and involved in child-rearing in

62 Moo, "1 Timothy 2:11-15: Meaning and Significance," 72; idem, "1 Timothy 2:11-15: A Rejoinder," *Trinity Journal* 2 NS (1981): 206. For example Galatians 5:6 shows love to be the medium (i.e., the efficient cause) through which faith works.

63 Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich, and Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, s.v. "δὲ," 180; Blass and Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament*, § 223(3); Moule, *An Idiom-Book of New Testament Greek*, 57; Spicq, *Les Épîtres Pastorales*, 383; Ridderbos, Paul: *An Outline of His Theology*, 309, n. 140; Georges Didier, *Désintéressement du Chrétien* (Aubier: Editions Montaigne, 1955), 195. Examples of its use are in Romans 2:27; 14:20; 1 Corinthians 3:15; 16:3; 2 Corinthians 2:4; 3:11; 6:8; 1 Timothy 4:14; 1 Peter 3:20.

64 Robertson cites the generic use of the article as one of its primary uses (*A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, 756-57).

65 Paul, in fact, legitimized and even exalted the position of both single men and single women (1 Cor. 7:25-38). Also he spoke highly of widows, some of whom may have been childless (cf. 1 Tim. 5:3-10).

66 Spicq, *Les Épîtres Pastorales*, 383-84; Moo, "1 Timothy 2:11-15: Meaning and Significance," 72, n. 69; idem, "1 Timothy 2:11-15: A Rejoinder," 205-6; cf. Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective*, 222-23.

67 Moo, "1 Timothy 2:11-15: Meaning and Significance," 72; cf. Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective*, 222-23.

much if not all of her adult life.⁶⁸ Further, these were activities of surpassing social worth for a first-century woman.⁶⁹ Support for this position comes from 1 Timothy 5:14, in which Paul stated that he desired young widows to marry and to "bear children" (*τεκνογονεῖν*).

Qualities worthy of eternal rewards. Carrying out activities is not enough, however, to participate in the rewards that may accompany eschatological salvation. The inner qualities of a Christlike character must also be present, and so Paul mentioned four of them.

Verse 15 is actually a conditional sentence whose protasis, "if they remain" (*ἐάν μείνωσιν*), comes at the end of the sentence. The verb, meaning "remain, continue, abide," has the sense of not leaving the realm or sphere in which one finds oneself.⁷⁰ The change from third person singular ("she shall be saved") to third person plural ("they remain") is awkward, but can be understood by noting that in verses 9-15 Paul referred to women either with the plural noun (v. 9: *γυναῖκας*) or with the singular, generic noun (vv. 11-12: *γυνή*).⁷¹ Thus in verse 15 Christian women are in view in both parts of the sentence; an understood generic noun is used in the first part with a singular verb, and a plural form is understood with the plural verb in the second part.

Next, Paul specified that Christian women are to remain "in faith and love and holiness." These nouns are used without the definite article to stress the qualities involved. "Faith" (*πίστει*) is active, personal faith in Christ (cf. Eph. 1:15).⁷² He is also the source of that faith (1 Tim. 1:14; 2 Tim. 1:13), and its result is practical activity (1 Thess. 1:3). "Love" (*ἀγάπῃ*) is love that reaches out to serve

⁶⁸ Hopkins's study of Roman tombstones suggests that the median age of death for wives was 34 and for husbands was 46.5. Angel's study of skeletal remains found in Greece during the period of Roman rule suggests that the median age of death was 34.3 for women and 40.2 for men. See Keith Hopkins, "On the Probable Age Structure of the Roman Population," *Population Studies* 20 (1966): 260-63, and J. Lawrence Angel, "Ecology and Population in the Eastern Mediterranean," *World Archaeology* 4 (1972): 94-95, table 28.

⁶⁹ Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective*, 222-23; Spicq, *Les Épîtres Pastorales*, 399-400.

⁷⁰ Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich, and Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, s.v. "μένω," 503-4.

⁷¹ Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 69; Spicq, *Les Épîtres Pastorales*, 384. Bullinger refers to this as a Hebrew idiom called heterosis of person or number, whose purpose is to call attention to the truth taught by the change (E. W. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible* [1898; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1968], 525).

⁷² Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich, and Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, s.v. "πίστις," 663.

others (1 Cor. 13:4-7; Eph. 5:2; Phil. 1:15-16).⁷³ "Holiness" (*ἀγιασμῶ*) refers to the daily process of sanctification and "it is always assumed that it is accomplished on the basis of the state of sanctification attained in the atonement."⁷⁴ The condition of holiness that results stresses the active process of being sanctified.⁷⁵

The final phrase, "with discretion" (*μετὰ σωφροσύνης*), serves as the closing bracket for Paul's instructions concerning women in the worship assembly in 1 Timothy 2:9-15. The word *σωφροσύνης* also occurs in verse 9, where women are exhorted to adorn themselves with decency and discretion. The term carries with it the ideas of good judgment, moderation, and self-control,⁷⁶ and in verse 15 the term underscores the moderation and self-control Christian women are to demonstrate as they participate in the process of progressive sanctification.

Summary. In verse 15 Paul summarized his discussion of how women are to act in the worship assembly, and he stated the expected result: They will experience salvation in the eschatological sense, which includes the judgment of works and receiving of rewards. Women are to fulfill their proper role in life, a concept summarized by "childbearing." This figure of speech refers to the general scope of activities in which Christian women are to be involved.

In addition to these outward activities, women should have the inner adornment of Christian character, typified by faith, love, and holiness, accompanied by discretion. Together these activities and attitudes combine to exemplify the "good works" of verse 10 with which a woman is to adorn herself. These works are the result of God's working in the life of the believer (Phil. 2:13) and are worthy of eschatological rewards. Therefore in the fullness of eschatological salvation ("she shall be saved"), women will receive rewards commensurate with the good works they have done (2 Cor. 5:10).

Conclusion

First Timothy 2:11-15 is a key passage in understanding the New Testament's teaching on women in ministry. In seeking to provide a

⁷³ *Ibid.*, s.v. "ἀγάπη," 5.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, s.v. "σωφροσύνης," 802; cf. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, s.v. "ἀγιασμός," by O. Proksch, 1:113.

⁷⁵ Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*, 263.

⁷⁶ Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich, and Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, s.v. "σωφροσύνης," 802.

consistent exegesis of this passage, this article has sought to determine how the original audience—Timothy and those in the Ephesian church—would have understood the Apostle Paul's directives to them.

In 1 Timothy 2 Paul addressed four problem areas in the worship assemblies at Ephesus and gave directives for correcting them. First, believers should offer prayer in the assembly for all individuals, especially government officials (vv. 1-7). Second, the men must pray with cleansed consciences, free from the stain of interpersonal conflicts (v. 8). Third, the women, rather than dressing ostentatiously, should adorn themselves with modest clothing and attitudes and with deeds worthy of eschatological reward (vv. 9-10).

Fourth, the women should learn with an attitude of quiet submissiveness, rather than be involved improperly in teaching and leading men in the worship assembly (vv. 11-15). More specifically, Paul directed women to learn in the worship assembly with a quiet and submissive attitude rather than to teach or have authority over a man in that context. He gave two reasons for this directive. First, the pattern of male headship was established in creation and Paul wanted to see this principle affirmed in the church. Second, the principle of male headship was violated through the reversal of authority roles in the Fall with devastating consequences, and Paul wanted the believers to avoid such a role reversal and its consequences in the church. Despite the results of this reversal of roles in the Garden of Eden, women who fulfill their God-ordained roles as women and who have the inner adornment of a godly character may expect to receive future perfection of salvation with its accompanying rewards.