

Life in Community
An Ordered Community, Part 1
The Place of Gender
1 Timothy 2:9-15

- I. The Difficulty of Properly Interpreting This Text
 - A. Culture and Background
 - 1. Ephesus and women
 - 2. Jewish conception of women in worship and religious education
 - B. Use of language: women or wives?
 - 1. The word used over 200x in NT
 - 2. ~2/3 refers to women in general
 - 3. ~1/3 refers to wives
 - 4. Which one here?
 - C. Descriptive or prescriptive?
 - 1. Is Paul describing how things should be specifically for the church at Ephesus where Timothy is leading-because of the context of powerful Ephesian women?
 - 2. OR, is Paul prescribing how things should always be in every church everywhere for all time?
 - D. The issues of sin and creation and the bearing of children in relationship to salvation...what?
- II. Looking at the Issues from the Text
 - A. Paul seems to be referring to women in general, not just wives
 - B. Paul seems to be making a prescriptive statement, especially given the example of “creation order” and the discussion of elders in the next text

- 1. Yes, there are “women teaching” passages in the NT (Acts 2:15-18; Acts 18:26; 1 Cor. 11:4-5; Titus 2:3-4; 2 Tim. 1:5)
 - 2. Yet, the authoritative role of the pastor/teacher seems restricted to men
 - C. Paul elsewhere connects Adam with the one chiefly responsible for the true “fall of man” (Rom. 5:12-21)
 - 1. This is more about “how events occurred”
 - 2. It is less about “who is responsible/at fault”
 - D. Child-bearing and salvation
 - 1. No one really knows for sure what to do with this!
 - 2. Even Peter says some of Paul’s writings are hard to understand!
 - 3. Four views
 - a. Women can actually be saved through childbirth
 - b. Women can be delivered from the curse of pain upon childbirth (no more pain/death)
 - c. An odd reference to Jesus’ birth
 - d. Avoid errors of verse 11-12
 - 4. None of the above work well
 - 5. There is some importance of home-life/motherhood here
- III. What Paul Isn’t Saying
 - A. Even with the injunction for women not to be lead teachers in the congregational setting, Paul is not by extension saying:

1. That women are inferior to men
 2. That the place of women in the life of congregational community is not valuable or vital
- B. Also, we must be careful not to extend this designation beyond its proper context
1. Workforce/industriousness (Lydia)
 2. Politics/government (Deborah)
 3. These may be addressed elsewhere, but not here – this is speaking to life in the community of faith and its practice
- IV. A Final Note
- A. The salvific declaration that there is “no male or female” does not negate the God given creative distinctions between men and women.
- B. God has made us by our very nature (biological) to be complimentary to one another. We are not the same and the differences are incredibly significant. One is not better or worse, just different. It is our sin self-interest that usually magnifies the differences in a negative way. Redemption and a Christocentric focus shows us that the differences are not negative at all, but a blessing by design.