

TEXT

1 Timothy 2:8-15

1 Peter 3:1-6

INTRODUCTION

We who are counted members of the household of God (which is the church of God), are grateful to God for our place in His household. We know we did not deserve such a place, being sinners. But the Son of God, Jesus Christ, brought us into this household by shedding His own blood for us, to take our punishment upon Himself, to wash us clean from the guilt of our sins. The Holy Spirit of God worked in us repentance, by which we are forgiven our sins, and faith, by which we are justified, and, so, adopted to be sons of God, members of His great household.

As such, we want to know from our Lord Jesus how He will have us conduct ourselves in the household of God, which is the church. And it is His purpose to teach us that. He left instructions for us with His apostles, and He commissioned the church to teach His disciples to observe all things that He has commanded.

So it is that His apostle Paul wrote that it is a matter of first importance in the church that all types of prayers be made for all types of people, so that, in answer to those prayers, God our Savior will grant that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, and that the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ may be preached all over the world, to all men.

Now, let's say that on a certain Lord's Day, when the church assembled for worship, and began to pray,

there was a man who came for prayer having committed all kinds of sins, but was not repentant about it; he was just doing wrong toward God and toward other men, telling himself that he had done nothing wrong

another man in the assembly was full of anger; he was angry at God and angry at his wife and angry at other men in the church

two other men were embroiled in a dispute with each other over some obscure point of doctrine

I ask you a question, easy to answer: Is that good for prayer, that the men come in such a state? No, of course not.

Let's say that some time later, as the Holy Spirit caused the word of God to take effect in the men of that church, on a certain Lord's Day the men assembled for worship, and when they began to pray,

every man was repentant before God regarding sin; he was seeking the forgiveness that is sure to be found with God in the name of Jesus Christ

every man was in control of his temper; he was quick to listen, so to speak, and slow to become angry; he was not angry with God or with other people

every man was at peace with every other man in the church, refusing to be tempted into quarrels, ready to bear with the faults of others, and eager to forgive

I ask you the same question again, also easy to answer: Is it good for prayer, that the men come to church that way? Yes, of course that is good.

So let the men assemble for worship on the Lord's Day, ready to lift up holy hands in prayer without wrath and doubting.

BODY

By God's grace, it is not the men only, but the women, also, who join in prayer for all men. Women are adopted into God's household in the very same manner as are men---by faith in Jesus Christ; by believing in Him as having died for our sins, having been buried, and, on the third day, having risen from the dead! The women of the church have the same desire to pray as do the men, and the same right and the same responsibility to pray. The women want to worship in freedom and to live their daily lives in peace just as the men do; so they need to pray to God for all the king and all who are in authority. The women long for all men to be saved by God's grace as they have been; so they need to pray for the gospel to be preached, and for it to be believed, just as the men do.

Braided hair

So let's say that one week, a woman who is a true disciple of Jesus Christ wakes up on the Lord's Day to go to church, to assemble with the other disciples for worship, to give thanks and pray for all men with the other disciples. But she gives no thought to her hairdo...

Is that good for prayer?

Is it good for the other disciples, whether male or female?

Is it good for her?

Is it good for the unbelievers present in the assembly?

Is it good for the unbelieving members of her household?

Let's say that another week that woman sought to adorn herself in a way that is comely, modest, respectable. She arranged her hair in some way that was neat and simple.

Is that good for prayer and giving of thanks?

Is it good for the other disciples?

Is it good for her?

Is it good for the unbelievers present in the assembly?

Is it good for the unbelieving members of her household?

Is it good in the sight of God?

Let's say that another week the woman decides on a very striking hairdo. She comes to the assembly with

-an elaborate braid piled high on her head, interwoven with flowers and other pretty ornaments

-a color job that makes her hair some unnatural color

-a very eye-catching, trendy style, on the cutting edge of fashion

-a very short haircut, giving her a masculine look

Are things better now as to prayer; is this good for worship?

Is it good for the other disciples?

Is it good for her spirit?

Is it good for any unbelievers present in the assembly?

Is it good for the unbelieving members of her household?

Is it good in the sight of God?

It is the will of our Lord Jesus Christ that His disciples who are women prepare themselves for prayer on the Lord's Day, and for the activities of daily life, by adorning themselves modestly, not with braided hair, not with an elaborate, eye-catching, trendy hairdo.

Gold or pearls

Let's say that one Lord's Day a family is in from out of town visiting the grand-parents. Because they are members of a Reformed Baptist Church back home, they assemble with us for worship. What they don't know before they come is that the women of this church have not all come to the same conclusion about the wearing of jewelry. Some of the sisters have read what the bible says, talked it over with their husbands, asked the older women about it, and have come to the conclusion that they should come to church without any jewelry on at all. Other sisters have done the same: they have read what the bible says, talked it over with their husbands, asked the older women, and have come to the conclusion that they will wear jewelry, but only a little, keeping it subdued and unpretentious. As a result, as the visiting disciples come into the place of assembly, as they are greeted warmly, as they are made to feel welcome, as they participate in the worship service, as they join in prayer, they are not distracted from worship by any display of jewelry. They join in prayer for the government officials, and for the preaching of the gospel to all men, with no thought of jewelry.

I ask you, is that good for prayer?

Is it good for those disciples?

Is it good for those women who are making very little or no display of jewelry in the assembly?

Is it good for any unbelievers present in the assembly?

Is it good for the unbelieving members of those women's households?

Is it good in the sight of God?

But let's say that same family visits the church a year later. What they don't know is that during that time a change has taken place among the women. First one woman, then another, started wearing more jewelry.

One woman had a lot of money she could spend, as well as some expensive jewelry left her by her mother, and some given her by her husband. So she started wearing real gold and real pearls and real diamonds. She came to church with earrings, a necklace, a bracelet, and multiple rings, all very costly.

Other women could not get such quality, so they tried to make up for it in quantity. They started putting on big, dangling earrings, very showing necklaces, lots of bracelets, and every other kind of jewelry they could wear.

Are things better now for prayer in that church, are they more good than they were?

Is what the women of the church doing now good for prayer?

There are powerful forces in this world that despise true Christians. They hate our worship; they hate our way of living; they hate the way we say, "No" to their wickedness. They hate our opposition to abortion. They hate our rejection of so-called "gay marriage." They hate our rejection of their ridiculous big-bang evolution theories. We need God to make His servants, the government officials,

wise and diligent in how they bear the sword, so that our right to worship and live as the bible says will be secured; so that we can worship and live in peace and quiet.

And there are sinners far away from us who have not heard the gospel preached. There sinners very close to us who have heard, but have not believed.

These are very serious matters, about which the church must pray as a matter of first importance.

And is it good for prayer about these things for the women of the church to come for prayer making a show of jewelry?

Does a woman's gaudy display of cheap jewelry help the church pray?

Does a woman's display of expensive jewelry help her sisters and brothers pray?

Is that jewelry of great worth in God's sight?

Our Lord's apostles taught us that women are to adorn themselves modestly, not with gold or pearls.

[check whether there is time left; leave section three for next week if necessary]

Costly clothing - GEN: apparel - KJV: array - ESV: attire

Let's say that one Lord's Day a woman who is a true disciple of Jesus Christ goes to get dressed for church, to assemble with the other disciples for worship.

It is a given that she needs to get dressed...

She does not understand how much she needs to cover herself in order to be dressed in modest or comely or appropriate attire.

her skin

her figure

Is that good for prayer?

For the men?

For the other women?

For any unbelievers who are there?

this is just like the world

Let's say that on another Lord's Day she has learned from the older women in the church.

She now covers herself enough truly to be adorned in modest apparel.

Is that good for prayer?

for the men?

for the women?

for unbelievers?

CONCLUSION

Let the women of the church, the women who fear the Lord, the women who are wise, the women who care about the lost, the women who are the disciple of Jesus Christ, pray all types of prayers for all types of people. Let them do so with the men. Let them do so adorned in modest apparel, not in braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing.

1 Tim 2:9b ...or **costly** clothing [**G4185 *poluteles***]

1 Peter 3:4b ...which is in the sight of God **of great price** [**G4185 *poluteles***]

Webster 1828 on “modesty”

Unaffected modesty is the sweetest charm of female excellence, the richest gem in the diadem of their honor.

Excess in these things is not compatible with “modest apparel.”
These things are not adornment that is of great value in God’s sight.
These things are not useful for convincing the lost of the truth of the gospel.
Adornment with these things does nothing to help in prayer with the church.