



1 Timothy 2: Sharing God's Passion, 18-19 February

Personal Preparation 1

So much of chapter 1 of this letter was about urging Timothy to be on the look out for false teachers. Paul wants Timothy to protect the church from those who would wrongly teach the law, and by implication, wrongly teach the gospel of Jesus Christ. But there are other dangers that the Ephesian church faces as well. There needs to be unity amongst the Christians when they meet together for church and there needs to be order. If the Ephesian church doesn't get these things right, then they are in danger of being distracted from their mission – to see that people are saved through the message of Jesus Christ.

Read 1 Timothy 2:1-7.

How many times are the words – everyone/all/all man/the Gentiles, used?

In the early Christian church, 'the Judaizers' (see p4) had a big focus on turning gentile christians into Jewish believers. They held that there was great prestige in being Jewish and that certain Jewish customs (eg. circumcision, laws for eating, festivals) needed to be maintained. How does Paul's teaching on 'everyone' and 'all' correct this sort of teaching?

What outcome does Paul want to see as a result of praying for kings and all those in authority?

Do you think there is a link between living godly lives in quietness and peace – and God wanting people to be saved? How does one lead to the other?

Do you individually or we as a church pray very often in the way that Paul instructs? If not, why do you think that is? Today, be as specific as you can and pray for the leaders that have authority over you.

Personal Preparation 2

In the midst of Paul's instructions on prayer, we're given a wonderful explanation of God's passion for the world in verses 2:1-7. Spend some time thinking this through with the following questions:

What does God desire for the world? v4

What does this say about God's character?

How is salvation possible according to verse 5?

What does it mean that Jesus is your mediator (intercessor) who paid the ransom (price)? Read Hebrews 7:23-28 to help you think through this.

This passage makes it clear – there is only one God and only one mediator, Jesus Christ – who makes it possible to come to God. How does this compare to what lots of other people in Australian society think about God/religion/spirituality?

Pray for particular people in your life who you would like to 'be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth'.

Discussion Questions

Are there any comments or questions you would like to make coming out of the personal preparation time?

Read 1 Timothy 2:8-14

This passage is the source of much disagreement within the church and is also the reason for much criticism directed at the church. We need to look at these verses with care and humility. One 'interpretation' issue that you have to come to grips with is: what is the meaning that's applicable for God's people today and what in the text is intimately connected with the culture and issues of the past. This is an issue we need to confront with any passage we come to in the bible, but we particularly 'feel it' with a passage like this.

1. In verse 8, Paul gives an instruction about prayer in the Ephesian church. When you read that verse, what seems to be Paul's central concern – that they lift up their hands, or they lift up *holy* hands (that is, having no anger or disputing among them)?

2. Do you think we as a church can be in similar danger, that is, do Christian things in public like prayer, but underneath have division and 'unlove'?

3. If so, what should we do about it?

4. In verse 9, Paul gives an instruction about what Ephesian Christian women should wear. When you read that verse, what seems to be Paul's central concern – that they not have particular hair styles and wear certain jewellery, or that they dress decently and adorn themselves with good deeds?



5. How does this apply to Christian women today?

6. Could there ever be a 'right' time when a parent, husband or church pastor should raise this subject?

We've looked at Paul's instruction about prayer and about dress, now onto the more difficult subject for many – the roles of men and women in the church. We need to read this passage carefully, look at other bible passages that may help us in our understanding, as well as be on the look out for what were the particular issues the Ephesian church would have been struggling with at the time. In addition, we need to be aware of our own prejudices that are impacted by our culture and be mindful of how that can shape our response to the bible today.

What a woman should do:	What a woman should not do:

8. List the problems or difficulties that you (or others you know) have with this passage?

9. 1 Timothy teaches that it is appropriately qualified men who are to have authority of teaching and leadership in church. See also 1 Timothy 3:1-2. Read the below passages and then discuss how they inform men about the leadership qualities they should display?

There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:28

Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Saviour. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. Ephesians 5:22-28

Another point to consider is that in verse 11 of 1 Timothy 2, the word for 'quietness' is the same word that for some reason in the NIV has been translated as 'silent' in verse 12. Probably, a better translation would be 'quiet' for both, ie. a quiet attitude or demeanour. That same word has been translated 'quiet' in 1 Timothy 2:2 and 1 Thessalonians 4:11. In addition, in 1 Corinthians 11:5, Paul mentions women who pray and who prophesy in church. So he can't mean that women cannot open their mouths on a Sunday morning! The primary concern is about women, who in their actions and attitude, are usurping the teaching authority of qualified men who are leaders in the church. Perhaps we have an indication of these particular women who lack restraint in 1 Timothy 5:11-15.

One thing we need to keep in mind is that these words are given to Timothy to help him bring proper order to the Ephesian church. Paul's concern is for when Christians gather together for church. There are other times when we're told that it's proper for women to teach – Titus 2:3-4 (older women to younger women), 2 Timothy 1:5, 3:15 (parent to child, or adult to child); and Acts 18:26 (when Priscilla and Aquila are giving helpful explanation to Apollos). But there is still this overarching principal that 1 Timothy 2:11-12 teaches: within church, it is men who have the authority to lead and teach.



10. Does anyone have any comments or questions so far?



We can still be left with lots of questions and issues in our mind, but let's move onto the reasons that Paul gives for this distinction in the roles between men and women.

11. What two reasons does Paul give in verses 13-14?

12. Verse 13 is about creation. Read Genesis 2:15-18. Why is creation an argument for the distinct roles of men and women in church?

Verse 14 is about 'the Fall'. Read Genesis 3:1-7. Some people have thought that Paul gives the example of the Fall to show that woman shouldn't teach men because they are more open to deception and more gullible. No. Paul is making reference to the Fall as the prime example of an ungodly role reversal. At the Fall, Eve sinfully led the way and Adam sinfully neglected his role and did not lead. It should not have been that way. So creation points to the pattern of men who are to have authority. The Fall points to that same pattern but in a negative way.

13. What do you think verse 15 could mean?

Verse 15 is not easy! There are lots of views on this one. But given Paul has shown the distinct and different roles of men and women, as revealed in creation and the Fall, then it's likely that in verse 15 Paul is pointing again to that distinct role that women usually display – that is, they bear children (though not all women can or have the opportunity to bear children – Paul is making a general point). Women (generally) carry out their distinct role of bearing children as they persevere (like the men) in leading godly lives. At the end of their life of continuing on in faith, love and holiness, they will receive their heavenly price that Christ Jesus has won for them.

Below is a statement provided by 'The Gospel Coalition'. See www.thegospelcoalition.org. This statement is fairly dense but it helpfully provides a summary of how many Christians understand the biblical texts on the roles men and women in marriage and within the church.

“In God’s wise purposes, men and women are not simply interchangeable, but rather they complement each other in mutually enriching ways. God ordains that they assume distinctive roles which reflect the loving relationship between Christ and the church, the husband exercising headship in a way that displays the caring, sacrificial love of Christ, and the wife submitting to her husband in a way that models the love of the church for her Lord. In the ministry of the church, both men and women are encouraged to serve Christ and to be developed to their full potential in the manifold ministries of the people of God. The distinctive leadership role within the church given to qualified men is grounded in creation, the Fall, and redemption and must not be sidelined by appeals to cultural developments.”

Do you have any questions or comments to make about this statement?

Today’s study has necessarily been a long one given the passage we’ve been looking at. It may have raised lots of questions for you and maybe you don’t think they have been answered to your satisfaction yet. Please feel free talk to Garnet about any of this.

Pray that at freshchurch we would be a church in which men and women are treated equally in Christ, yet at the same time honour their complementary roles . Pray that men would lead in families and in church in a servant-hearted way—prepared to sacrifice and give like Jesus gave himself for the church.