



Faith Baptist Church of Cabot, Arkansas
Pastor's Mid-Week Bible Study
November 4, 2009

Lesson Eight - Godly Women
1 Timothy 2:9-15

...in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.

Introduction

In chapter two, the Apostle Paul has begun to address church issues for Timothy and the believers in Ephesus. He has called the church to prayer for all men and called for holy men to take the lead in prayer in public worship. Paul now turns his attention to the women in the Ephesian church.

We can infer from this passage that there were controversies in the church concerning men and women in public worship both in the appearance and in the attitude of some of the women. Paul pens the corrective instructions and Timothy is charged with delivering them. The controversies swirling in Ephesus started in the Garden and continue to today. Paul's words are still relevant and true.

Exegesis

- ❖ A Godly Woman and Her Appearance
 - An ordered appearance

The Apostle Paul encourages the women in the Ephesian church to put themselves together in well arranged attire. He is not suggesting a slovenly and unkempt appearance, but rather an appearance proper for women of God. He states this positively and negatively.

Positively, he points to propriety and moderation. Propriety, or shamefacedness, is a reverential dignity that draws no attraction to self but is concerned with others. Moderation, or sobriety, is soundness of mind and self-control. Thus, the Godly woman should keep her desires to draw the attention of others in check and dress in a dignified manner.

Negatively, Paul calls attention to plaited hair, the wearing of gold or pearls and expensive clothing. Such things were no doubt worn by the secular women of Ephesus, but even more they were the things that defined them. The danger in dressing like the culture is that we become defined by the culture.

➤ A fitting appearance

Rather than pursue a course of legalism and prescribe in detail what women should and should not wear, Paul simply teaches that if a woman professes to know, worship and follow God, she ought to look like it. And the attire that declares Godliness is the attire of good works. A Godly woman will be known not by what she wears, but by how she conducts her life.

❖ A Godly Woman and Her Attitude

➤ As seen in public worship

Silence (verses 2, 11, 12) speaks of quietness and tranquility, the attitude of submission (same as in Ephesians 5:21-22) and the attitude of modesty (1 Timothy 2:9-10).

Does Paul's instruction prohibit women from teaching at all? No. Timothy learned the Scriptures from his mother and grandmother. Older women are told to teach younger women (Titus 2:3). Paul was taught by both Aquila and his wife, Priscilla (Acts 18:26).

The context is immediately that of women exercising authority over men which violates the created complimentary roles and the mystery of Ephesians 5. The context is next that of Eldership in the church (1 Timothy 3) whose responsibilities are to govern and labor in word and doctrine, thus overseeing the instruction of the church (1 Timothy 5:17). Paul's concern for the church at Ephesus was that the women were overstepping their God given role and either seeking to be or acting as Elders and thus promoting anything but a tranquil learning atmosphere in the church. Thus, women in public worship were to remain silent and submit to the teaching of God's Word from the Elders.

➤ As seen in creation and the fall

Adam and Eve were created each in the Personhood of God yet each with distinct Manhood (Adam) and Womanhood (Eve) and lived in harmony with God and with one another. The reality of distinct roles before the Fall is seen in the fact that woman was created after man and for man. (1 Corinthians 11:8-9) Does this indicate male superiority? No. It indicates an ordered creation. It is not a matter of priority, but a matter of both male and female being subject to God's order in family and in church.

In the Garden Fall, it was the woman who was fully deceived by the serpent. In her deception she took the lead over her husband, eating of the fruit herself first and then giving it to Adam to eat. The issue was not only that she was deceived and sinned first, but that the God ordered roles were reversed and Adam listened to the voice of his wife and thus disobeyed God. (Genesis 3:17)

The creation of Adam and Eve was ordered by God and they were each given roles that would be complimentary to the other's. As each fulfilled that role, there was harmony. But with the reversal of roles and the entrance of sin came tension that has existed to this day. That tension was showing itself in the church at Ephesus.

➤ As seen in the childbearing

Is woman then without hope? No, "she will be saved in the childbearing." There are several interpretations as to what Paul means in verse fifteen. Several revolve around

individual women being saved in some way by their own child birthing experience. The difficulty with such an interpretation is in application to women who cannot have children or women who never marry.

Resolving the verse centers around defining who “she” is and who “they” are. In the immediate context the “she” is Eve. She sinned and led her husband to sin. She listened to the serpent, reversed God’s creative order, and transgressed God’s prohibition. Yet, she will be saved.

How will she be saved? Through “the childbearing.” Unfortunately, many translations omit the specificity of the Greek language in this verse – THE childbearing. Eve’s salvation would be accomplished through the childbearing promised in Genesis 3:15.

But who are “they”? They are all women who will believe in the Son born to Mary. “She”, Eve, is the representative of “they”, all women. For all believing women the disgrace of the deception is erased through the Savior born to Mary.

And what is the evidence of a woman’s salvation? Her continuance in “faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.” These are the marks of a saved and Godly woman. She does not need prominence, position, or fancy attire. She is satisfied to know the Savior and to follow His teachings.

Application

- There is a God ordained order for men and women in family and in church that involves submission and headship. Submission being the sacrificial act of love incumbent upon a Christian wife toward her husband in which the mystery of the Church’s love for Christ is revealed. Headship being the sacrificial act of love expressed by a Christian husband toward his wife as he gives his life for her and by that sacrifice reveals the mystery of Christ’s love for His Church.
- The God ordained order for men and women in the church precludes a woman from Eldership (being a Bishop/Pastor-Teacher). The governance of the teaching ministry of the church is entrusted to those men who fit the qualification of chapter three.
- Paul’s instructions do not prohibit a Godly woman from participation in the church. Paul specifically addresses the matter of learning and teaching in public worship (Pastor-Teacher) and a woman’s exercising dominion over a man (church oversight – Bishop/Eldership/Pastor).
- When both male and female surrender to God’s design for their life in family and in church, God is glorified, the mystery of Christ and His Church is revealed, and male and female live in pre-Fall harmony. In such an environment the Gospel proceeds without hindrance which is the desire of God who wants all men to be saved. (2:4)