

# Exercising Authority – Women and the Church

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## Part III – Biblical Foundation – Genesis 1-3, 1 Corinthians 14, 1 Timothy 2

### Genesis Chapters 1–3

In Genesis chapter 1, we learn that “God created the man in His image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them” (1:27). Then we are told that “God blessed them and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing which moves about upon the earth’” (1:28). Here we see that God created man to be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth, and rule over it.

In the second chapter of Genesis, we are shown in more detail how God brings about the creation of man and the fulfillment of His purpose for man. First we learn that God forms man from the dust of the ground, breathes into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man becomes a living being (2:7). Then God takes the man He has created and puts him in the garden of Eden to work and keep it (2:8, 15). In caring for the garden man is acting to subdue the earth. Next we see the man exercising his rule over worldly creatures as he names the birds of the sky, the beasts, and every living thing of the field when God brings them to him (2:19–20). At this point, while the man is accomplishing part of the purpose for which he was made in subduing and ruling over the earth, the purpose of being fruitful, multiplying, and filling the earth is still yet unrealized. For this task God creates a help for the man (2:18, 20). He creates the woman from the rib that is taken out of man’s side (2:21–22). When God brings her to the man, we see the man exercising his rule over her in naming her: “This one now is bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh; to this one will be called ‘woman’ (אִשָּׁה), for from man (אָדָם) this one was taken” (2:23). Then we learn that the man and woman have been brought together in order that the two become one flesh, in order that the goal of them being fruitful and multiplying and filling the earth be carried out (2:22, 24).<sup>1</sup>

Also, from this second chapter we observe that man’s primary task is to care for the garden and the woman’s primary task is to be a help to the man in bringing children into the world, in

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<sup>1</sup> On the procreative purpose of marriage, see David S. Hasselbrook, *Contraception and Christendom* (Missoula: Neofita Eleon, 2014), 39–42.

order to fill the earth and spread the dominion of mankind throughout the world. Such are their vocations. The man who is formed from the dust of the earth is to carry out his vocation in being joined to the earth in caring for it, and the woman who has her life from the rib of the man finds her vocation in bringing forth life in being joined to the man.

A few things can be said at this point. From the second chapter of Genesis, we see that the man demonstrates his rule over the woman at the moment the two are introduced. This rule is made known in him naming the gender of the woman, even as his rule over the animals was seen in him giving names to them. At this time man's relationship to the woman is not that of husband to wife, but of male gender to female gender, for every woman hereafter, whether or not she is married to this first man, is to be called "woman." The implications of this will become more clear as the examination of Scripture progresses. Also, the name "woman" is a constant indicator of the order of creation. To say the word "woman" is to speak of the creation of man first, from whom the woman is then created.

We have already heard and will continue to hear the term "ruling" in this essay. It should be noted from the start that ruling does not imply a right to abuse but a responsibility to lead. Ruling in this sense does not in any way have to do with value. All people, men and women, are equally sinful. All people, men and women, are equally loved and valued by God, equally reconciled and forgiven on account of Christ's death. Yet, all people do not have the same roles. While the world assumes that if a man is in a ruling position over a woman the woman has less value, God does not see things this way at all. While the world sees ruling in terms of power, the Scriptures present ruling in terms of responsibility and accountability. The fact is that God created man and woman as different from each other and with different roles. Life will be lived most fully and in accord with God's will when each gender lives according to the nature and roles which they have received from their Creator.

The third chapter of Genesis confirms the truths we have seen thus far. First, the very fact that the devil goes to Eve and not to Adam proves that the man has the rule over the woman, for the devil would most certainly not observe God's ordering, but seek to overthrow it. This he does by convincing the woman to eat of the forbidden tree without consulting the man (3:1-6). The man also disregards God's ordering in allowing the woman to eat without trying to stop her, even though he is apparently right there with her (3:6). For this God later reprimands him, saying, "you listened to the voice of your woman and ate from the tree of which I commanded you saying, 'Do not eat from it'" (3:17). So we see that the fall of mankind into sin comes about when the man and the woman fail to live according to their God ordered roles.

The punishments that the man and the woman bear as a result of the fall also reveal the roles of the two. To the woman God says, "I will surely cause your pain to become great; and with respect to your pregnancy, in pain you will bring forth children" (3:16).<sup>2</sup> Clearly this punishment is given in relation to the main task of a woman, that is, bearing children. Speaking of the second aspect of her punishment, God says, "[T]oward (אִשְׁתְּךָ) your man will be your desire (תִּשְׁקָה), but he

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<sup>2</sup> For an alternate translation of this verse, which does not alter the force of the argument here, see Hasselbrook, *Contraception and Christendom*, 81.

will rule (מָשַׁל) over (בְּ) you” (3:16). Here God makes it clear that as a result of the fall, the woman will desire to rule over her man, however, according to God’s will, the man will continue to rule over her. This interpretation of “desire” (תִּשְׁקָה) is supported by the use of the same word and syntactical constructions in Genesis 4:7. In that verse God, speaking to Cain, says, “Is there not a lifting up [of your countenance] if you are doing well? But if you are not doing well, sin is lying down at the door and toward (אֵל) you is its desire (תִּשְׁקָה), but you must rule (מָשַׁל) over (בְּ.) it.”<sup>3</sup>

CTCR 1985 states, “Nowhere in Scripture is it ever said that power or authority (*exousia*) or rule (*arche*) is given to the man over the woman” (p. 31). This statement is misleading for two reasons. First, it refers to all of Scripture but uses Greek words. While the New Testament is written in Greek, the Old Testament is written in Hebrew and Aramaic. Of course one won’t find *exousia* or *arche* in the Old Testament. Perhaps the CTCR is looking at the Septuagint in this regard.

The second reason the CTCR statement is misleading is because it is just not true. We have just seen that God says that the man will rule over the woman in Genesis 3:16. No, he doesn’t use the Greek *exousia* or *arche*, but he does use the Hebrew מָשַׁל (*mashal*) in this instance. *Mashal* occurs 80 times in the Hebrew of the Old Testament and in each of these occurrences it has the sense of “to rule.” In the Septuagint, it is translated by ἄρχω (the verbal form of *arche*), κυριεύω, ἄρχων (another noun form of *arche*), κύριος, κραταίομαι, ἡγέομαι, ἐξουσιάζω (the verbal form of *exousia*), καθίστημι ἐπί, κατακυριεύω, δεσπόζω, δεσπότης, κρατέω εὐχερῶς, κρατέω, ἄρξεται δυναστεύειν, δυνάστης, τυραννεῖ, βασιλεύς, μετὰ κυριείας, δυναστεύω, and κατάρχω.<sup>4</sup> In Genesis 3:16, the Septuagint translates *mashal* with κυριεύω, which has the sense of “to rule” or “to be lord/master of.”<sup>5</sup> This idea is also present in the use of the verb מַעַבְּ, which has the sense of “rule over” and is used for when a man marries a woman, and its corresponding noun form מַעַבְּ, which has the sense of “lord” and is used of a husband (see, e.g., Gen 20:3; Exod 21:3; Deut 22:22; 24:1, 4; Prov 31:11).<sup>6</sup> A similar theology is expressed in 1 Peter 3:6, where we

<sup>3</sup> The only other place where the Hebrew word for “desire,” תִּשְׁקָה, occurs in the Bible is Song of Solomon 7:11: “I belong to my beloved and toward (עַל) me is his desire (תִּשְׁקָה).” In this verse the desire is of a man toward (עַל) rather than אֵל a woman, and the verb and preposition for ruling over (מָשַׁל and בְּ) are absent. While this verse may seem to be using “desire,” תִּשְׁקָה, in a different sense than Genesis 3:16 and 4:7, it is possible that the sense may be the same. The woman states that she “belongs to” her beloved, and so the “desire” of the beloved could be seen as the desire for the beloved to be married to his woman and enter into the relationship where he is in the ruling position over her as her man (i.e., he desires to be her husband and all that goes with this).

<sup>4</sup> See John R. Kohlenberger III and James A. Swanson, *The Hebrew-English Concordance to the Old Testament: With the New International Version* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 1036, מָשַׁל. For some of the occurrences of the word, the Septuagint either doesn’t translate it because it appears to have a different *Vorlage* or translates it as if the word is the noun מָשַׁל.

<sup>5</sup> Walter Bauer et al., eds., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature* (3d ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000) (BDAG), s.v. κυριεύω.

<sup>6</sup> See Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon: With an appendix containing the Biblical Aramaic* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1906; repr., Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2000) (BDB), s.v. מַעַבְּ and מַעַבְּ.

are told that Sarah called Abraham “lord” (κύριον), with the implication that other women should follow in her steps. More will be said on the application of Genesis 3:16 later.

We turn now to the punishment that the man bears as a result of the fall and his corresponding role that it points to. To the man God says,

Because you listened to the voice of your woman and ate from the tree of which I commanded you saying, ‘Do not eat from it,’ being cursed is the ground on account of you. In painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. And thornbushes and thistles it will cause to sprout for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you will eat bread until your returning to the ground, for from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return (3:17–19).

Here the punishment of man is given in relation to his main task. Before the fall the man was to care for the garden which was the source of the food for him and the woman. After the fall, man is told that now, rather than eating from the garden, he will eat the plants of the field, already pointing to his exile from Eden. He will have to painfully labor to care for the ground from which he will, with great difficulty, work to get food for himself and his woman. This role of man is further highlighted when God later sends him out of the garden: “And Yahweh God sent him (i.e., the man) out from the garden of Eden to work the ground of which he was taken from there” (3:23).

We also see that the man, as a result of his sin, will return to the ground from which he is taken. The woman likewise will return to the ground, for she is taken from the man, and through the man ultimately has her origin from the ground as well. In some sense, therefore, the return of the woman to the ground at the time of death is a reminder of the order of creation. This order is also pointed to in the Hebrew word for “man,” אָדָם, which comes from the Hebrew word for “ground,” אֲדָמָה. This word for “man” (אָדָם) can be used for the man alone:

And Yahweh God formed the man (אָדָם) of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man (אָדָם) became a living being. (Gen 2:7)

or for the woman as part of man:

Male and female He created them, and He blessed them and called their name “man” (אָדָם) on the day they were created. (Gen 5:2)

Again, woman shares in the name “man” (אָדָם), which comes from the word “ground” (אֶרֶץ), by virtue of the order of creation where the woman comes from the man, who is formed from the ground.<sup>7</sup>

In the third chapter of Genesis, the roles of the man and woman are further shown in the very names they bear. The name Adam (אָדָם) in Hebrew is the same word as the word for “man” (אָדָם), which, as was mentioned, comes from the word for ground (אֶרֶץ), representing what he was created from, what he caused to be cursed, and what he was called to work.<sup>8</sup> Regarding the name Eve, we hear in Genesis 3:20, “And the man called the name of his woman Eve (חַוָּה), because she was the mother of all living (חַיִּים).” Thus man again shows his rule over woman, this time in his role as husband, in naming her. The name that Adam gives her, like the purpose for which she was created and the punishment that she receives for her sin, puts the focus on her role of bearing children and bringing life into the world.<sup>9</sup>

### First Corinthians 14:33–40

In 1 Corinthians 14, Paul addresses the role of women in the assembly of the church. He says,

As in all the assemblies (ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις) of the saints, let the women be given to silence (σιγάτωσαν) **in the assemblies**<sup>10</sup> (ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις); for it is not being entrusted/permitted (ἐπιτρέπεται) to them to be given to speaking (λαλεῖν), but let them be in a state of submission (ὑποτασσέσθωσαν), just as also the Law is saying. And if they desire to learn **anything**, let them make it their practice of asking **their own** (ἰδίους) **men** (ἄνδρας) **at home** (ἐν οἴκῳ); for **a shameful thing** it is for a woman to be speaking (λαλεῖν) in an assembly (ἐκκλησία). Or **from you** did the word of God go out? Or **to you alone** did it reach? If anyone considers himself to be a prophet or one who possesses the Spirit, let him be/begin acknowledging with respect to the things I am writing that they are the command of the **Lord**. But if someone is not recognizing these, he is not recognized.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, brothers of mine, be eager to engage in prophesying and do not begin to prevent speaking in tongues. But let all things be taking place **properly** and **according to order**.

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<sup>7</sup> In another sense it could be said that all of humanity after Adam and Eve also come from the one man, Adam, who was formed from the ground, because of which we all share in the name “man” and because of whose sin, which we participate in, we will return to the ground from which we ultimately come (unless, of course, Christ returns first).

<sup>8</sup> According to the Hebrew, the first use of the personal name Adam, based on context and the occurrence of אָדָם without the definite article, appears to be in Genesis 2:20 or 3:17. In the Septuagint translation of Genesis (a Greek translation of the Hebrew original dating to around the third century BC), the first occurrence of the personal name Adam (Αδαμ) is in Genesis 2:16.

<sup>9</sup> While not explicitly stated in the Genesis account, it would seem that Adam gets his name from God.

<sup>10</sup> Where Paul places an emphasis on a word or phrase by placing it first or toward the beginning of a clause or sentence, bold type is used to show that an emphasis exists in the Greek.

<sup>11</sup> Or “let him not be recognized.”

In this first epistle to the Corinthians, Paul can use the word translated here as “assemblies” and “assembly” (ἐκκλησία) to refer to believers or a local group of believers, in which case it is usually translated as “church” (e.g., 1:2; 10:32; 12:28; 15:9). At other times, however, he uses the same word to refer to the gathering of Christians together (e.g., 11:18; 14:19, 23, 28), as he does in the passage we are now considering.

We know that at these assemblies of the church the Lord’s Supper was celebrated (11:17–34), excommunication was carried out (5:1–8), disputes between Christians were apparently to be judged (6:1–8), praying took place (11:3–16), money was collected for the saints (16:1–4), songs were sung (14:15), apostles and their associates or delegates provided instruction (1:12; 3:6; 4:17), and Paul’s letter was read (1:2–3). Also, from the context of chapter 14, we know that there was speaking in tongues and prophesying. Tongues consisted of revelation in another language that was not understandable (14:1–2), and was not to be carried out in the church without an interpreter (14:27–28). Prophesying in the broad sense consisted of words that were understandable and worked to build the church up through edification, encouragement, and comfort (14:3–5). Such prophesying consisted of the impartation of revelations, knowledge, prophecy in the narrow sense (i.e., most likely foretelling future events), and teaching in 14:6; and psalms, teaching, revelation, and interpretation of tongues in 14:26–27, 29–32.<sup>12</sup> These acts of speaking in the assembly, particularly when an apostle was not present, appear to have been carried out by those who held the position of prophet, teacher, tongue speaker, and/or tongue interpreter. According to Paul in 12:28, not everybody had these gifts/offices of the Spirit (see also 12:7–11).

It is in the context of this assembly that Paul gives his directives concerning women, and yet not his directives, but the Lord’s. He indicates that women are to be silent in the assemblies. The verb he uses for “being silent” (σιγάω) can signify essentially absolute silence, as it appears to be used in 14:30, where the one prophet is to keep silent if another prophet receives a revelation.<sup>13</sup> This word can also be used to signify silence with regard to the specific topic under consideration, as it is used in 14:28, where the person who speaks in a tongue is to be silent in that regard if there is no interpreter present. In this second usage, the person is not being forbidden from saying anything in the assembly, but rather is being told to be silent as far as speaking in tongues is concerned.<sup>14</sup> It is in the latter manner that Paul uses the verb in 14:33 of women being silent in the assemblies, namely, they are to be silent in regard to a particular focus under consideration.

From the context we can see two areas with respect to which the women are to be silent. The first pertains to a specific type of speaking. The second has reference to how women learn.

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<sup>12</sup> The fact that Paul includes all of these functions under prophesying in the broad sense is shown by his statement at the end of chapter 14, “Therefore, brothers of mine, be eager to engage in prophesying and do not begin to prevent speaking in tongues” (14:39), suggesting that prophesying and speaking in tongues comprise the two categories that he addresses in this chapter.

<sup>13</sup> See also this use of this verb in Acts 12:17; 15:12, 13. The noun form of the word (σιγή) also seems to have this sense in its two New Testament occurrences in Acts 21:40 and Rev. 8:1.

<sup>14</sup> For similar uses of the word, see Luke 9:36 (silence with regard to the transfiguration); 18:39 (silence with regard to calling out for Jesus); 20:26 (silence apparently in regard to questions meant to trip Jesus up).

Paul indicates that it is not permitted or given to women to be given to speaking. Rather they are to be in submission as the Law says. The word that Paul uses for “speaking” is λαλέω (*laleo*).

According to CTCR 1985, “When *laleo* has a meaning other than religious speech and preaching in the New Testament, this is usually made clear by an object or an adverb (e.g., to speak like a child, 1 Cor. 13:11; to speak like a fool, 2 Cor. 11:23)” (p. 33). First, notice the use of the term “usually.” Is it any surprise that in the religious writings of the New Testament a word the denotes speaking would usually refer to religious speech and preaching? Just look at the more general word for speaking of λέγω in, say 1 Corinthians, and it will be seen that the same holds true. The CTCR is clearly over-categorizing and pigeonholing the term λαλέω. When viewed on its own terms, it can be seen that λαλέω can be used for various types of verbal content (with or without an object or an adverb), including:

Teaching or proclamation about God (e.g. 1 Cor 2: 6, 7, 13; 14:18, 29)

Speaking in the open (John 7:13)

Speaking in a side conversation (Acts 26:31)

Speaking in a foreign tongue (1 Cor 14:11)

Words spoken by a child (1 Cor 13:11)

Speaking intelligible words (1 Cor 14:9)

Speaking truth instead of lies to one’s neighbor (Eph 4:25)

Speaking evil or deceitful words (1 Pet 3:10)

Speaking idle words (Matt 12:36)

The speaking of a person right after being raised from the dead (Luke 7:15)

Apparently authoritative speaking by Jesus’ mother and brothers, seemingly not related to religious teaching (Matt 12: 46–47)

An official word concerning the death of Jairus’ daughter, not religious in nature (Mark 5:36)

Peter’s “official” word in asserting he did not know Jesus (Mark 14:31; Luke 22:60)

The words spoken by a mute man healed by Jesus, not necessarily religious in nature (Matt 9:33; 12:22; 15:31; Mark 7:35, 37; Luke 1:20; 11:14)

Jesus not speaking to Pilate but maintaining his silence (John 19:10)

As can be seen from this survey, the word can be used for a variety of speech content, a variety that Paul also exhibits not only in his letters in general, but even in 1 Corinthians in particular. Given the contrast between speaking and being in submission that Paul sets up, however, he is pointing to a type of speaking that exhibits a lack of submission prohibited by the Law.

Paul's mention of the "Law" brings to mind the laws given to Moses by the Lord. In these laws, women are not given positions of authority either in the religious realm (e.g., the priests, the Levites over the temple and its furnishings, and the head artisans who constructed the tabernacle were to be males [see Exod 31:1–6; 35:30–36:1; 37:1; 38:21–23; Num 3:1–4:49; 18:1–7]) or the civil realm (e.g., the elders of the people, judges, leaders, and ruler/king were all male according to the Law [see Exod 24:9–11; Num 11:16–30; Deut 1:9–18; 16:18–20; 17:9, 12; 17:14–20; 19:12; 21:1–4]). In this sense the "Law" provides the proof that women were not to speak in any authoritative manner on issues bearing on religion (i.e., reading of Scripture, speaking in tongues, prophesying, or carrying out excommunication) or governance (e.g., settling disputes) in the assembly. This is what the "Law" indirectly implies, rather than specifically states, regarding women's roles. The laws given to Moses do not imply that the speaking forbidden to women included women's corporate participation in prayer, responses, or singing (1 Cor 11:5; 14:15; Col 3:16; Neh 8:2, 6).

The reading of Scripture by a woman in an assembly would fall under the speaking that exhibits a lack of submission prohibited by the Law. This is supported by the fact that the only passage in the Old Testament where the public reading of Scripture is prescribed in the Law is in Deuteronomy 31:9–11. In these verses, Moses commits the Law to the priests and elders of Israel and says to them, "You (masc. sg.) will read (קָרָא) this Law before all Israel in their hearing." Moses indicates that this is to occur at the end of every seven years at the Feast of Booths. According to Carl F. Keil, Moses "entrusted the reading to the priesthood and the college of elders of the nation, as the spiritual and secular rulers of the congregation; and hence the singular, 'Thou shalt read this law to all Israel.'"<sup>15</sup> Apart from this passage we have examples of the public reading of the Scripture in the Old Testament, all of which are by men, for example the prophets Moses and Joshua (Exod 24:7; Josh 8:34–35); the priest Ezra, the Levites, and perhaps the governor Nehemiah (Neh 8:3, 7–9, 18); Josiah the king of Judah (2 Kgs 23:2; 2 Chr 34:30; perhaps also applicable here is Deut 17:19); and the scribe Baruch (Jer 36:6, 10, 15).

This seems to be the proper point to address some of the comments made by CTCR 1985 relative to the Old Testament and in the comparisons it makes with the New Testament. When speaking of the Old Testament, CTCR 1985, without any qualification, states, "[T]he Old

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<sup>15</sup> Carl F. Keil, "The Pentateuch" in C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament* (10 vols.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1866–91; repr., Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1996), 1:979.



Testament reflects the patriarchal nature of the society in which it was written and with which it was concerned” (p. 6). Then, in regard to the New Testament, we hear,

[Jesus’] conversation with the Samaritan woman (John 4:7-30) shows His willingness to dismiss conventions of men which stand in opposition to His purposes. Normally a Jew would not address a Samaritan and normally a man would not speak to a woman in public. However, the Lord’s conversation with this woman shows how He disregards these conventions of society in order to communicate about Himself and the Kingdom. (p. 7)

Women were seldom pictured in Rabbinic literature as exemplifying trust in God or as possessing theological acumen. But Jesus sees women as exercising such virtues. (p. 7-8)

These descriptions of the Old and New Testament can be misleading in what they say or may be taken to imply. The impression one gets from the CTCR is that the Old Testament catered to the conventions of society, whereas the New Testament is willing to dismiss such conventions. To say that “the Old Testament reflects the patriarchal nature of the society in which it was written and with which it was concerned” without further clarification is capable of great misunderstanding. The Old Testament laws that God gave to the Israelites certainly dismissed the conventions of the nations among whom Israel lived or bordered, for instance, regarding the foods they ate and how they conducted themselves. Now while the Old Testament may record *incidents* that reflect patriarchal conventions of society, the fact is that God in the Old Testament, who is not hindered by social convention, Himself gave the Old Testament *laws*, which rather than cater to patriarchal conventions, substantially support and establish them. God gave the Israelites the Old Testament laws so that in keeping them they would stand out as a “kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Exod 19:6). The Old Testament laws were meant to make the Israelites stand out among the nations, not blend with societal conventions. Those laws thoroughly reflect a patriarchal hierarchy because they reflect the will of the Creator who created male and female differently. If God was going to have the Israelites refrain from food and conduct that were part of societal customs, He certainly would have them refrain from any societal custom of appointing only men to positions of authority if this were problematic or inconsistent with His will. This he does not do. His laws appoint men, not women, to positions of ruling. He could have went against convention, but he doesn’t in this regard because convention lined up with His order of creation. The presence of prophetesses in the Old Testament (and in the New Testament for that matter), an analysis of which will be taken up in the next essay of this conference, does not overthrow this order, but rather, when closely read in the contexts in which they are spoken of, support and validate this order.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> It should be noted that the laws about appointing men to positions of ruling are of a different nature from those laws that, say, legislate regarding polygamy or divorce. With the former, God is commanding that such appointments be made. With the latter, God is not commanding polygamy or divorce, which are not His will, but rather is legislating it to avoid abuse of the woman in recognition of sin in the world. While the theology of the Scriptures reveal that polygamy and divorce are not God’s ultimate will, the same cannot be said of only men being appointed to positions of ruling. The Scriptures from beginning to end make this known as God’s ordering and

The statements of the CTCR about rabbinic literature, rabbis, and what Jews of Jesus' day "normally" did can also be misleading, particularly if they give off the impression that the such Rabbis and Jews accurately reflect the theology of the Old Testament. While rabbinic literature may not picture women as exemplifying trust in God or possessing theological acumen, the Old Testament certainly does, for instance, the case of Hannah (1 Sam 1:1-2:10). While in Jesus' day a Jewish man may not have normally spoken to a woman in public, Jesus' speaking to the Samaritan woman at the well is perfectly in line with all of the well incidents in the Old Testament where godly men speak to women in public, namely with regard to Abraham's servant speaking to Rebekah and Jacob speaking to Rachel (Gen 24:15-19; Gen 29:9-12; most likely also Moses with the daughters of the priest of Midian [Exod 2:17]). When making comments about the Jews of Jesus' day, it would be helpful for the CTCR to make it clear that such Jews do not necessarily represent a faithful Old Testament Israelite who is guided by the Word of God. Otherwise, the perception may be given, especially after stating that the Old Testament "reflects" a patriarchal society, that such Jews accurately represent Old Testament theology. Also, right after stating that the Old Testament "reflects" a patriarchal society, the CTCR in the next paragraph refers to "the disdainful and condescending attitudes toward women of so many of [Jesus'] contemporaries." In case such close connection of these sections may suggest differently, let's make it clear that "disdainful and condescending attitudes toward women" do not point to the problem of Biblical patriarchy, but to the problem of sinful men who need to repent, not of their roles, but of their attitudes which are not shaped by the theology of the Scripture.

CTCR 1985 states that "prophecy was a message delivered as words from the Lord. It is evident that there were women in the apostolic church who were moved by the Spirit to prophesy. Certain women exercised a particular verbal gift" (p. 10). It also says, "First, that Paul is not commanding *absolute*,<sup>[47]</sup> unqualified silence is evident from the fact that he permits praying and prophesying in 1 Corinthians 11. The silence mandated for women in 1 Corinthians 14 does not preclude their praying and prophesying<sup>[48]</sup>" (p. 33). Furthermore, in its footnote 48, it approvingly quotes George Stoeckhardt who maintains, "Neither the praying nor the prophesying belongs to that speaking which [the apostle] forbids for women directly in 1 Cor. 14:33-36" (p. 33).

Against the idea that Paul allows women to prophesy, Gregory Lockwood suggests that Paul in 1 Corinthians 14 is

focusing primarily on women's participation through tongues-speaking and prophecy.<sup>[28]</sup> This is confirmed by his use of λαλέω, "to speak," throughout chapter 14. After frequent references to

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desire. God says that He hates divorce in Malachi 2:16. Through His institution of marriage as between one man and one woman with Adam and Eve, through His warnings not to multiply wives (e.g., Deut 17:17), through the accounts of jealousy and strife caused by polygamous situations, God reveals that polygamy is contrary to His purposes. However, He never says that He hates men having the ruling position over women and He doesn't reveal a theology that indicates that such male leadership is against His will. On the contrary, He is disgusted when men fail to fulfill this role. See, for example, Genesis 3:17 regarding God's attitude toward Adam and Judges 4:9 regarding His attitude toward Barak.

*speaking* in tongues<sup>c</sup> and three references to *speaking* prophetically (λαλέω again, 14:3, 6b, 29), practices which must be regulated in an appropriate way (14:27-32), he now adds this further regulation, commanding women not to “*speak*” (λαλέω, 14:34) in church.<sup>17</sup>

Developing this point, Lockwood states,

This explanation assumes that because λαλέω, “to speak,” earlier in chapter 14 referred to speaking in tongues and prophesying . . . , that same verb (λαλέω) must entail those same kinds of speaking in 14:34-35. This reading of 14:33b-38 is that here Paul prohibits the women from speaking in tongues, prophesying, and, a fortiori, authoritative (pastoral) preaching and teaching in the worship service.<sup>[60]</sup> Nevertheless, this should not be understood as a blanket ban on women prophesying or speaking in tongues in *any* context. Philip’s daughters, presumably, would still be permitted to prophesy in private (Acts 21:8-9) . . . .

[T]he question arises why Paul did not make his position clearer back in 1 Corinthians 11, where he seems to allow properly covered women to speak in tongues and prophecy (11:5). Here it may be helpful to consider his pastoral approach in other parts of the letter. A close parallel may be found in his discussion of food offered to idols (chapters 8-10). In chapter 8 he lays the theological foundation for approaching the issue and gently suggests that reclining in an idol temple could be an offense to the weaker brother. Then by way of a lengthy excursus (chapter 9) he points to his own example as the free Christian apostle who has voluntarily given up some of his rights for the sake of the church, including the weaker brother. Then he firmly forbids any participation in cultic meals (10:14-22). His position in both chapters 8 and 10 is that the Christian should not partake of meals in pagan temples, but his appeal in chapter 8 is based on Christian love, and he saves his explicit command until chapter 10. A similar dynamic may explain the relationship between chapters 11 and 14. In chapter 11 Paul appeals to the Corinthians on the basis of Christ’s headship and their natural sense of propriety and decorum. He calls his description a “custom” (συνήθεια, 11:16), not a “command” (ἐντολή, the word in 14:37 that refers to 14:34-35). Then in chapter 12 he lays the theological foundation regarding spiritual gifts and follows it up with an excursus on Christian love (chapter 13). Paul then concludes the more detailed discussion of tongues and prophecy in chapter 14 with a number of directives regarding the proper role of tongues, prophecy, and the appropriateness of women holding the teaching office.<sup>[61]</sup>

Paul’s approach, then, is a fine example of wise pastoral care. Not everything can be addressed at once. A foundation must first be laid before the more difficult things that must be said can be said. Thus Paul in 11:2-16 is not yet ready to issue “the Lord’s command” (14:37) regarding the women. He restricts himself primarily to the issue of head-coverings and prayer. Although he briefly mentions prophesying (11:5), he leaves his direct orders regarding the more sensitive issue of their speaking during worship (including prophesying and speaking in tongues) to the end of chapter 14.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Gregory Lockwood, *1 Corinthians* (Concordia Commentary; Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2000), 508.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 533-34.

As Lockwood convincingly demonstrates, the speaking forbidden by Paul included prophesying. Therefore, if in an assembly women were forbidden from speaking words that were directly given them by the Lord, they would certainly be forbidden from speaking words that were directly given to others by the Lord (i.e., the words given to the prophets and apostles, that is, the Scriptures).

We come back now to Paul's use of the "Law" in 1 Corinthians 14:34. We saw that the mention of the "Law" brings to mind the laws given to Moses by the Lord. Mention of the "Law" also brings to mind the books written by Moses (cp. Gal 4:21; Matt 5:17; Luke 16:16; 24:44; John 1:45), including Genesis chapters 2 and 3, where, as we have seen, man is set forth as the ruling gender. These chapters of Genesis support the same conclusion as that drawn from the Mosaic laws. Furthermore, in addition to the indirect indications of the submission of the woman to the man in these two chapters, Genesis 3:16 contains the direct statement regarding the submission of woman to man: "[T]oward (לְ) your man will be your desire (תִּשְׁקֶה), but he will rule (יִשְׁרָ) over (עַל) you." As we saw, this verse indicates that, although after the fall the woman's desire will be to rule over her man, yet according to God's will, the man will continue to rule over her. Paul's reference to the "Law" leads us to this most direct statement in the "Law" bearing on the issue that he is addressing and reveals either that Genesis 3:16 provides a specific example pertaining to the relationship between husband and wife that is based on and reveals a broader principle regarding male and female relationships, or that "your man" in Genesis 3:16 does not apply only to a woman's husband, but to any man who is in "relationship" with the woman in a given sphere and where there is a position of ruling to be occupied by one of them (i.e. in the church, state, home [i.e., father or other man of the house in the case of an unmarried woman], etc).

Again, Paul says, "As in all the assemblies (ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις) of the saints, let the women be given to silence (σιγάτωσαν) **in the assemblies** (ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις); for it is not being entrusted/permitted (ἐπιτρέπεται) to them to be given to speaking (λαλεῖν), but let them be in a state of submission (ὑποτασέσθωσαν), just as also the Law is saying." Here it is clear that Paul is not addressing the relationship of a woman to her husband, but the relationship of the female gender to the male gender (of which the relationship of a woman to her husband would be one subset). He is certainly not excluding single women from these strictures. He also makes it clear that these instructions apply to "all the assemblies of the saints." CTCR 1985 tries to limit Paul's words to the "worship service of the congregation" appealing to 1 Corinthians 14:26-33 in support of this (p. 33). However, as was seen and will be discussed further, the activities carried out when the Corinthians gathered together was much broader than modern "worship services." Also, the clear words of Paul do not say "as in all the worship assemblies of the saints" but "as in all the assemblies of the saints." Certainly a "worship assembly" would fall under the category of "all the assemblies." The fact is that there are no clear contextual markers indicating that Paul is limiting his meaning of assemblies to "worshiping" assemblies in the modern sense of the terms. Any interpretation that asserts that he is limiting himself to such meaning "is artificial and improbable."

In addition to women being silent in regard to a particular type of speaking in the assembly, we see that women are also to be silent in regard to how they learn at the assembly: “And if they desire to learn **anything**, let them make it their practice of asking **their own** (ἰδίους) **men** (ἄνδρα) **at home** (ἐν οἴκῳ).” Here Paul points out that in the assembly women were to learn in silence. If they had a question, they were to ask their own men at home, namely, the father or other head of the house for an unmarried woman, and the husband for a married woman. Paul doesn’t address the case of a woman who has no such “man,” probably because it was unlikely in his day that a woman would find herself in such a situation given the dependence of women on men and the reality of extended families. In a case where a woman may have had no man to ask at home (say, for instance, where the woman had become a convert and the husband had not), in the sphere of the church her “man” would be her pastor (in the case at Corinth, likely the one holding the office of “teacher”), who she would likely have asked after the gathering of the assembly was over.

Now with this injunction, Paul is not only addressing women who used questions to somehow undermine the authority of the clergy, rather he is giving instructions for a general practice that, when followed, not only avoids public shame, but also fosters men living up to their leadership roles, not only in the church, but also in the home. The man is to be the head of the house, not only in matters of physical, economic, and or other importance, but also in spiritual matters. By the women asking their men at home about theological and churchly matters, men are placed in a position of (1) making the home a place where God is discussed, (2) developing Christian relationships with their women, (3) being forced to pay attention and stay up on matters of the faith, and (4) having to find out answers for their home where they are unable to address matters. If this practice that Paul calls for were practiced diligently, the ways of Christ would flourish in the home setting and the relationships between the men and women, husbands and wives, would be grounded in the faith and overflow with God’s blessings.

A look at the activities that occurred at the assembly of the church in Corinth reveals similarities and differences from what one would typically find in a worship service today, in particular in a traditional service. Tongues and prophesying that involved direct revelation are no longer necessary. These activities that existed in the very early church, particularly before all the New Testament writings were written and available, were a temporary means that God used to assure that apostolic doctrine was followed until the apostolic teaching was readily available in writing. So Paul says that tongues will cease (1 Cor 13:8). Also, the author of Hebrews indicates that God confirmed the apostles and their word with signs, wonders, miracles, and gifts apportioned by the Spirit (Heb 2:3–4). In other words, tongues, prophesying in the narrow sense and other direct revelations, gifts of healing, and working of miracles (1 Cor 12:8–10, 28–30) not only served to edify the church spiritually and physically, but were signs that accompanied and testified to the validity of the apostles and their witness. In the New Testament such gifts are usually, if not always, exercised by an apostle or someone who has or will come into contact with an apostle (e.g., Acts 2:1–4, 43; 3:6–9; 4:29–30; 5:12–15; 6:8; 7:55–56; 8:6–7, 13, 14–18, 26, 29, 39–40; 9:3–7, 10–16, 10:1–7, 9–16, 44–46; 11:27–28; 13:1–3; etc.). When the apostles

are gone, however, and their words are in writing, these gifts are no longer necessary, nor is there any indication that they should continue to be sought after in the church.

Most of the other activities carried out at the assembly of the church in Corinth still occur today in the worship service setting, such as the reading of Scripture, singing of songs, praying, collection of money, the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and prophesying in the broad sense through teaching that imparts knowledge, edifies, encourages, and comforts. The judging of disputes between fellow Christians is not carried out today in the worship service. Also, some activities that occurred in the Corinthian assembly have been broken up, for example, in the current setup of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS). For instance, the asking of questions, which, while forbidden to women in the assembly, is apparently allowed to men at Corinth. In the LCMS, questions are not asked during the worship service. Instead a teaching aspect of the assembly of the early Christians has been relocated to a Bible study session, where questions are typically asked. Also, excommunication, which was carried out in the assembly at Corinth (1 Cor 5:1-5), is today carried out in the LCMS mainly in the voters' assembly, where a rite can be used subsequently in the worship service which amounts to a formal declaration of the decision of the voters.

In addition to separating certain aspects of the Corinthian assembly, the LCMS has added certain elements that are not addressed by Paul at Corinth. When Paul wrote 1 Corinthians, the assembly did not meet in church buildings. Rather, the Christians at Corinth met in one or more homes (see, e.g., Acts 18:7). As such, positions in the church related to maintenance and upkeep did not exist. Neither were there financial secretaries, presidents, vice presidents, etc., as we know them today. Nor was there a need for the decisions that go along with a congregation owning its own property, such as pertain to whether or not to expand, relocate, remodel, etc. Such positions and decisions today have as their forum the church council or the voters' meeting.

Whether or not we are dealing with Bible study classes, church councils, voters' meetings, or other forums for the gathering of the congregation together which are not addressed by Paul, Paul's appeal to what the Law says about women being in a state of submission would still apply. A woman should not speak in an authoritative manner, hold positions of authority, or exercise authority in matters bearing on religion or governance in any type of assembly of the congregation, and where there is learning involved in such settings, she should learn in silence, addressing any questions to her man at home. In other words, Paul points to a general rule as given in the Law, namely, that a woman is not to rule over a man but is to be submissive, and applies that general rule to the assembly of Christians at Corinth. Paul's application is of a general rule to a specific situation, and this general rule is applicable to other situations as well. The Corinthians and we do not have a God of disorder, but of peace (1 Cor 14:33). Therefore we seek to follow order which brings peace, not only in a worship service, but in all aspects of life. And as Paul says, doing all things properly and in order (14:40) includes following the ordering of the relationships between man and woman that God has set in place. God makes that ordering known in Genesis 3:16 without specific reference to the worship setting, although, as we have seen, He intends it to apply to that setting as well as others.

## First Timothy 2

The ordered roles of men and women that Paul speaks of in 1 Corinthians, as well as other aspects related to gender roles, also find expression in his following instructions to Timothy. In light of Timothy being placed by Paul in Ephesus to put down false teachings (1 Tim 1:3, 18), Paul says,

I exhort, therefore, of first importance (πρώτου πάντων) that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving be made on behalf of all men (άνθρώπων), on behalf of kings and all who are being in positions of authority (των εν υπεροχη/), in order that we be leading **a peaceful and quiet** (ήσύχιον) **life** in all godliness and holiness/propriety. This is good and pleasing in the sight of the Savior of ours, God, who desires **all men** (άνθρώπους) to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. . . .

I desire, therefore, that the men (τους άνδρας) be given to praying in every place, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting. In the same way also that women (γυναίκας) be given to adorning themselves **in modest/respectable clothing with a sense of shame and chastity/self-control** (σωφροσύνης), not with braids and gold or pearls or costly apparel, but on the contrary (άλλ') with respect to what is proper for women (γυναίξιν) who are professing reverence for God, [namely,] with good works.

Let **a woman** (γυνή) be learning (μανθανέτω) **in silence/quietness** (ήσυχία), in all submission/obedience (υποταγή). But (δέ) I do not permit **a woman** (γυναικί) **to be teaching** (διδάσκειν) nor **to be exercising authority over** (αυθεντείν) a man (άνδρός), but on the contrary (άλλ') to be in silence/quietness (ήσυχία). For Adam **as a first one** (πρώτος) was formed, then (είτα) Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but (δέ) the woman (γυνή), by being deceived, has entered (γέγονεν) **into the state of transgression**. But (δέ) she will be saved through childbearing, if they remain in faith and love and holiness/sanctification with chastity/self-control (σωφροσύνης). (1 Tim 2:1–4, 8–15)

Before looking at these verses, we first draw our attention to the sphere with respect to which Paul gives these instructions. In 3:14–15, Paul says,

**These things** I am writing (γράφω) **to you** [i.e., Timothy] — although I am hoping to come to you with quickness; but if I am being delayed — in order that you know how it is necessary (δεί)<sup>19</sup> to be conducting oneself/behaving **in the household of God** (εν οίκω

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<sup>19</sup> For other instances of the use of δέι followed by an infinitive, where no subject of the infinitive is specifically supplied, see John 4:20 and Acts 5:29. In these passages from John and Acts, a general principle is stated that pertains to all people, i.e., the implied subject is all people. In the usage of 1 Tim 3:15, the instructions apply to Timothy and all members of the Church.

θεοῦ), which is the church of the living God (ἐκκλησία θεοῦ ζώντος), the pillar and support of the truth.

When Paul uses the present tense form of the verb “to write” (γράφω), he is usually referring to a subject matter that he is still addressing, whether he is near the beginning, middle, or end of treating the subject.<sup>20</sup> From the context of 1 Timothy, we can see that he speaks these words right near the middle of the letter, which both before and after his words is filled with instructions to Timothy regarding proper conduct.

Paul indicates that his instructions pertain to conduct or behavior in “the household of God” (ἐν οἴκῳ θεοῦ). CTCR 1985 indicates that this phrase only points to the context of “worship/church” (p. 34). This, however, is not the case. Where this or a similar phrase occurs in the Gospels, it is always in reference to the temple in Jerusalem as the “house of God.”<sup>21</sup> In other words, “house” (οἶκος) refers to a building in such usages. It is doubtful that Paul is referring to a building in 1 Timothy 3:15, for then he would be speaking of “how it is necessary to be conducting oneself in a/the house of God.” It is unlikely that the room where Christians met in a person’s house would, at this time in the early church, be viewed as a “house” of God, since the room was part of a house and the house as a whole was not solely dedicated for the use of worship at this point.

Elsewhere in the New Testament, the phrase “house of God” (ἐν οἴκῳ θεοῦ) refers not to the temple in Jerusalem, but to the household of God, as it does in this passage of 1 Timothy.<sup>22</sup> Such an understanding is verified by Paul when he defines the “household of God” as “the church of the living God” (ἐκκλησία θεοῦ ζώντος). In the New Testament, where mention is made of the “church of God” without any further qualifications, it always refers to the spiritual household of believers.<sup>23</sup>

Paul also furnishes us with a parallel usage in 1 Timothy 3:4–5, where, regarding a bishop, he says that it is necessary for him to be “one who is ruling well **his own household** (τοῦ ἰδίου οἴκου), by having **his children** in subjection with all dignity (on his part). But if someone does not know how to rule **his own household** (τοῦ ἰδίου οἴκου), how will he have charge of **the church of God** (ἐκκλησίας θεοῦ).” Here it is clear that Paul is using the household of the bishop in parallel with the household of God. Just as the household of the bishop, i.e. his children, were not always at home, and yet he was to keep them in subjection wherever they were, so the household of God which the bishop is over is not always at the assembly of Christians, and his care for them extends beyond the confines of the assembly. For example, he would visit them when they were sick (Jam 5:15).

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<sup>20</sup> E.g., near the beginning possibly in 2 Cor 1:13, the middle in Gal 1:20, and the end in 2 Cor 13:10.

<sup>21</sup> In Matt 12:4, Mark 2:26, Luke 6:4: “into the house of God” (εἰς τὸν οἶκον τοῦ θεοῦ); in Matt 21:13, Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46: “the house of Mine” (ὁ οἶκός μου); John 2:16: “the house of My Father” (τὸν οἶκον τοῦ πατρός μου); John 2:17: “for Your house” (τοῦ οἴκου σου).

<sup>22</sup> See Heb 10:21: “over the household of God” (ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον τοῦ θεοῦ) (cp. Heb 3:6); and 1 Pet 4:17: “from the household of God” (ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ θεοῦ).

<sup>23</sup> As τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ in Acts 20:28, 1 Cor 15:9, Gal 1:13; τῆς ἐκκλησίας τοῦ θεοῦ in 1 Cor 11:22; τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ in 1 Cor 10:32; ἐκκλησίας (genitive) θεοῦ in 1 Tim 3:5.



What has been said thus far supports the fact that when, in 1 Timothy 3:14–15, Paul indicates that he gives Timothy the instructions in the letter in order that it be known “how it is necessary (δεῖ) to be conducting oneself/behaving **in the household of God** (ἐν οἴκῳ θεοῦ), which is the church of the living God (ἐκκλησία θεοῦ ζῶντος), the pillar and support of the truth,” Paul is not indicating that he is giving instructions for how the Christians were, in particular, to conduct themselves at a “worship service.” Rather, he is giving directives for how the Christians were to conduct themselves “in the household of God,” namely, as members in the spiritual family of faith. As the letter makes clear, this includes matters pertaining to the assembling of Christians (e.g., Paul’s charge for Timothy to teach in 4:6, 11–16) and matters pertaining to the conduct of Christians apart from the assembly (e.g., the conduct of slaves toward their masters in 6:1–2).<sup>24</sup>

With these points in mind, we can now return to Paul’s instructions in chapter 2 of his letter, where issues of authority seem to be in the forefront. First Paul says,

I exhort, therefore, of first importance (πρώτου πάντων) that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving be made on behalf of all men (ἀνθρώπων), on behalf of kings and all who are being in positions of authority (τῶν ἐν ὑπεροχῇ), in order that we be leading **a peaceful and quiet** (ἡσύχιον) **life** in all godliness and holiness/propriety. This is good and pleasing in the sight of the Savior of ours, God, who desires **all men** (ἀνθρώπους) to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. . . . (1 Tim 2:1–4)

Here Paul instructs the Christians to offer prayers and give thanks for all men, focusing in particular on people who are in positions of authority, which may also include those in positions of authority in the church (notice the conflict with church authorities in 5:19). We can see that although such actions would be carried out with Christians assembled together, they are also activities that the household of God would be engaged in apart from the assembly. The focus of Paul’s words suggest that Christians should pray for authority figures who err or who are facing difficulties, as well as give thanks for those that rule well (notice the mention of “elders” who rule well in 5:17). The content of the prayer and thanksgiving may have as its goal “that we be leading **a peaceful and quiet** (ἡσύχιον) **life** in all godliness and holiness/propriety,” that is, believers may pray for authorities to so govern them, and for all men to so relate to them, in such a way that the Christian may live a life of peace and quiet.

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<sup>24</sup> An alternative translation of 3:15 would be that Paul is writing to Timothy in order that it be known “how it is necessary (δεῖ) to be conducting oneself/behaving **among the household of God** (ἐν οἴκῳ θεοῦ), which is the church of the living God (ἐκκλησία θεοῦ ζῶντος), the pillar and support of the truth.” Such a translation would indicate that Paul’s instructions pertain to how Christians were to conduct themselves when among each other, which would obviously include when they come together as an assembly. However, the instructions that Paul gives in 1 Timothy extend beyond just how Christians behave around other Christians, namely, it includes directives pertaining to daily conduct even when not around other Christians (e.g., the conduct of slaves toward their masters in 6:1–2). Therefore, this translation is not supported by the greater context of the letter.

Another way to understand Paul's words is that the offering of such prayers and thanksgiving has as its goal and assumed result that believers will be able to lead "a peaceful and quiet life" knowing that they have turned matters over to God. They are not to stir it up with others and especially authorities, knowing and being thankful that God is in control. With this interpretation, the leading of "a peaceful and quiet life" would suggest leading a life of submitting to authorities and situations with others, and therefore being "quiet" with regard to complaints and uprisings against them.

We see that Paul connects living "a peaceful and quiet life in all godliness and holiness/propriety" with pleasing God "who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."<sup>25</sup> This appears to be Paul's way of indicating that how a Christian lives can draw others to God.<sup>26</sup> On the other hand, failure to live properly as a member of the household of God can lead to reproach by the adversaries of Christianity and blaspheming of the name and teaching of God (1 Tim 5:14–15; 6:1).

Next Paul proceeds to give instructions to men in particular:

I desire, therefore, that the men (τούς ἄνδρας) be given to praying in every place, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting. (1 Tim 2:8)

When Paul says "therefore," he is connecting these words with what he said previously. In light of Paul exhorting that prayers and thanksgiving be made for all men, specifically focusing on authority figures, he now directly instructs men (τούς ἄνδρας), as distinct from women, to be given to such prayer in every place. While "every place" would include the place and time when Christians assemble together, it would obviously not be limited to the same. Here Paul addresses the nature of men, who have a tendency to be given to wrath and lifting up hands to fight. Instead Paul directs them to be given to lifting up holy hands in their stations of life and without doubting God's control. Instead of rising up to fight at the perceived injustices of authority figures or others, men are to submit to the will of God to lead "a peaceful and quiet life in all godliness and holiness/propriety."

If Paul's words of "lifting up holy hands" refers to the posture of prayer, such would not only be carried out in an assembly of Christians, but at other times as well. Praying "without wrath and doubting" would then be an instruction of how prayer should be carried out, again, something that applies to all prayer at all times and in all places for the Christian.

After addressing the nature of men and their potential to rebel against authority and be given to wrath, Paul turns to women. Again, the topic of authority is in view. First he speaks to the subtle way women seek to gain authority over men, namely, by trying to make use of the power of attraction. He forbids this, saying,

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<sup>25</sup> It is possible that what is pleasing to God here includes also the praying for all men, including those in authority. The connection of such praying with God desiring the salvation of all would then suggest that the prayers would include petitions for unbelievers to come to faith.

<sup>26</sup> The same idea is taught by Jesus in Matt 5:16 and Peter in 1 Pet 2:11–12.

In the same way also that women (γυναῖκας) be given to adorning themselves **in modest/respectable clothing with a sense of shame and chastity/self-control** (σωφροσύνης), not with braids and gold or pearls or costly apparel, but on the contrary (ἀλλ') with respect to what is proper for women (γυναίξιν) who are professing reverence for God, [namely,] with good works. (1 Tim 2:9–10)

Again, while Paul's words would apply to how women should conduct themselves in the assembly of Christians, he is certainly not just instructing them to dress and conduct themselves with modesty and self-control in a worship service. Paul's instructions here apply to the whole life of a woman lived in the world. How much Paul's words need to be heeded today, where women seek to gain control over men by how they dress, is self-evident. Of course there are also women who dress inappropriately out of ignorance, cultural trends, or to draw attention to themselves. In any case, women are to submit to the authority of God's word and seek to clothe themselves in good works rather than immodest attire.

Paul goes on to address other ways that women may seek to exercise authority in an ungodly way. He says,

Let a **woman** (γυνή) be learning (μανθάνετω) **in silence/quietness** (ἡσυχία), in all submission/obedience (ὑποταγῆ). But (δέ) I do not permit a **woman** (γυναικί) **to be teaching** (διδάσκειν) nor **to be exercising authority over** (αὐθεντεῖν) a man (ἄνδρός), but on the contrary (ἀλλ') to be in silence/quietness (ἡσυχία). For Adam as a **first one** (πρῶτος) was formed, then (εἶτα) Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman (γυνή), by being deceived, has entered (γέγονεν) **into the state of transgression**. But she will be saved through childbearing, if they remain in faith and love and holiness/sanctification with chastity/self-control (σωφροσύνης). (1 Tim 2:11–15)

We saw that leading “a peaceful and quiet life” in 2:2 suggested leading a life of submitting to authorities and situations with others, and therefore being “quiet” with regard to complaints and uprisings against them. A similar point is made by Paul when he directs a woman to “learn in silence/quietness (ἡσυχία), in all submission/obedience (ὑποταγῆ).” Women are to have a gentle nature and to be “quiet” in regard to complaints, challenges, and uprisings against the authority figures who teach them. Paul is not addressing here situations where authority figures go against the Word of God, for in that case all people, men or women, are called to obey God rather than man (Acts 5:29). From 1 Corinthians 14:33–35, we know that the learning of women in silence (where the verb σιγάω was used) applied to the Christian assembly, where women were forbidden from asking questions, but were directed to inquire of their own men at home. Based on the nature of Paul's other directives so far in 1 Timothy, which apply not only to when Christians are gathered together but also to other times, Paul's injunction here in 1 Timothy 2:11 would indicate that, not only at public gatherings of Christians, but even in the home setting, the

woman should have a gentle nature and be “quiet” with regard to complaints, challenges, and uprisings against her man.

After addressing the general posture of a woman learning under a person holding a position of authority, Paul continues: “But (δὲ) I do not permit **a woman** (γυναικὶ) **to be teaching** (διδάσκειν) nor **to be exercising authority over** (αὐθεντεῖν) a man (ἄνδρός), but on the contrary (ἄλλ’) to be in silence/quietness (ἡσυχία).” The initial “But (δὲ)” indicates some kind of contrast with the preceding statement. Here Paul contrasts the learning of women with teaching or having authority. While the woman has a role in learning and a proper manner in which to learn, Paul makes it clear that she does not have a role in teaching or having authority over a man. Paul, as he has done up to this point, is presenting a general principle that has application not only to when Christians assemble, but also to other times, even when no other Christians are around.

Paul writes 1 Corinthians while he is in Ephesus (1 Cor 16:8), so the Ephesian church likely knew the contents of 1 Corinthians. Also, Timothy goes to the Corinthian church shortly after 1 Corinthians is received in Corinth (1 Cor 4:17), so Timothy is familiar with the contents of 1 Corinthians. Furthermore, Paul writes his first letter to Timothy (c. 63–65 A.D.) when Timothy is in Ephesus (1 Tim 1:3) and for application to the Ephesian church, some eight to ten years after Paul composes his first letter to the Corinthians (c. 55 A.D.).<sup>27</sup> All of this is to say that Timothy and the Ephesian church, among whom he is residing when 1 Timothy is written, would be familiar with Paul’s instructions to the Corinthians, where he forbids authoritative speaking pertaining to religion or governance in the assembly. Thus it is very probable that Paul is not repeating what is already known to Timothy and the Ephesian church, but rather is supplementing or filling a need that is lacking in instructions. From 1 Corinthians it is clear that women should not teach in the Christian assembly. But what about outside of the assembly?

We know that in Ephesus people were teaching false doctrine. Paul specifically directs Timothy to command such people to stop this teaching (1 Tim 1:3). In 1:6 Paul describes these teachers as those who have deviated from the truth and “turned away to empty talk (ματαιολογίαν)” (1:6). He instructs Timothy to avoid “the godless (βεβήλους) empty talk (κενοφωνίας) and opposing arguments of the falsely-called knowledge” (6:20). Also, he tells him to “reject the talk that is godless (βεβήλους) and characteristic of old women (γραῶδεις)” (4:7). The false teaching at Ephesus included a disparaging view of marriage, where apparently some were forbidding this calling (4:3). This wrong understanding seems to have been coupled with an equally disparaging view of children, as evidenced by the fact that the first good work listed for widows to make the widow list was the bringing up of children, suggesting that some (or many?) women were avoiding this (5:10). The women — young widows are specifically addressed by Paul — who avoided marriage and children had extra time. What they did with this extra time is indicated by Paul in 5:13, where he says that

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<sup>27</sup> See D. A. Carson, Douglas J. Moo, and Leon Morris, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 283, 373. Bo Reicke, *Re-examining Paul’s Letters: The History of Pauline Correspondence* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2001), 141, argues that 1 Corinthians was written in the spring of 56 A.D. and 1 Timothy in the summer/fall of 56 A.D. Such would in no way weaken the point, but, in fact, could be seen to strengthen it.

[T]hey are accustomed to being (μαυθάνουσι) idle, with the result that they are being given to going around from house to house, and not only idle but also nonsense talkers (φλύαροι) and officious (περίεργοι), with the result that they are being given to speaking (λαλοῦσαι) things which are not fitting.

From Paul's description of these wandering women, it seems that they filled their idle time by going around from house to house, asserting themselves into the affairs of others (as if possessing some kind of authority) and speaking/teaching incorrect and improper things.

While it is evident from Paul's instructions to Timothy throughout the letter that all false doctrine was to stop being taught, whether being taught by a male or female, it is clear from Paul's words of "I do not permit **a woman** (γυναικί) **to be teaching** (διδάσκειν)" that women were not only to stop teaching false doctrine, but also to stop teaching period when the practice involved teaching men. The present infinitive form that Paul uses for "to be teaching" (διδάσκειν) reveals that he is speaking of a practice or custom of teaching men. This teaching does not pertain to, say, taking a man aside and showing him his error, as with the case of Priscilla, who with her husband helped Apollos when he did not have an accurate knowledge (Acts 18:26). Nor does this teaching pertain to the teaching of a child.<sup>28</sup>

In summary, due to a knowledge of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, it is unlikely that women would have been teaching in the assembly of the gathered Christians or would have been attempting to get in the pastoral office which certainly was involved in this teaching. Instead, Paul's prohibition against a woman teaching a man was most likely directed against teaching that occurred by women at the houses where they wandered.

At the time that Paul writes to Timothy, some women served as priestesses in the pagan temples. Outside of the religious realm, however, it seems that women did not have many opportunities to teach, say, as public educators, although some served as pedagogues, apparently of children, and that most likely of female children. Extant records also reveal that some women were poets, some were schooled, and some studied philosophy. Thus, Paul's instruction regarding the learning of women and women teaching men (not children) may have been intended to have application to or critique of these types of activities. Given that Paul's other instructions pertain to conduct not only at the gathering of Christians but also generally during a person's life, we could say that what Paul says about teaching and learning for women was meant to include all forms of such activity, regardless of whether they existed at Paul's time or would come into existence later.

As was mentioned earlier, regarding Paul's use of the word "teaching" in 1 Timothy 2:12, CTCR 1985 states,

The apostolic restriction in 1 Timothy 2 pertains to that teaching of God's Word which involves an essential function of the pastoral office. The word *didaskein* is inappropriately applied to the Sunday

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<sup>28</sup> For the use of ἀνὴρ as an adult male, see BDAG, s.v. ἀνὴρ 1.b.

school teacher, the Christian day school teacher, the home Bible study teacher. As Bishop Bo Giertz of Sweden suggests, “When in 1 Tim. 2:12 the word *didaskein* is used, it is a rather pregnant expression (the word means: to be a teacher in the church and to be charged by God with the proclamation of His Word).” Teaching which does not “coincide with that commission to which the New Testament refers when using the words *didaskalos* or *didaskein*” is not in view here.<sup>49</sup> (p. 34-35).

Such a statement is clearly an assertion that does not hold in the New Testament usages of *didaskein* or *didaskalos*. For in 1 Corinthians 11:14 nature teaches (*didaskein*). In Colossians 3:16, Christians teach (*didaskein*) one another when they sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs together. In Hebrews 8:11, Israelite men are described as teaching (*didaskein*) their neighbor and brother about God. Furthermore, in Titus 2:3 the older women are called to be teachers of good things (*kalo-didaskalos*), where the teaching is done toward the younger women (2:4). Therefore, there is no compelling reason to believe that Paul limits his use of *didaskein* in 1 Timothy 2:12 to the pastoral office.

In addition to forbidding women to teach men, Paul indicates that women are also not permitted “**to be exercising authority over** (αὐθεντεῖν) a man (ἀνδρός).” Here Paul enlarges what is forbidden to women from teaching, which is a subset of authority, to all authority as a broader category. Again, as we have seen, Paul’s instructions in 1 Corinthians forbid women from authoritative speaking in the assembly, not only regarding religious teachings, but also in terms of governance. This would have been known to Timothy and the Ephesians. This suggests that Paul has a broader application in mind.

In Paul’s day women were increasing their influence on political life, mostly through money, prestige, or pressure, an influence that was not looked on favorably by many in the Greco-Roman culture of that time. Woman did not vote in the political realm. Yet, there is evidence that suggests that some women may have begun to hold civil offices. Given this changing climate in society, Paul’s words could be seen as a rejection of the direction that the role of women was beginning, or exhibiting the potential, to take.

In the realm of the church, Paul’s words also have application to instances of authority that was exercised apart from the assembly of the Christians. In particular, the role of the deacon comes into view. According to the oldest documents of the early church, the deacons assisted the bishop or “pastor” during the Christian assembly in helping to distribute the body and blood of Christ in Communion. Apart from the Christian assembly, they also took the body and blood of Christ to those members of the church who were absent from the assembly. In addition, the deacons were the ones who administered the money given for the poor and distributed the same. This aspect of the deacon appears to have biblical verification in the appointment of the seven in Acts 6:1–7 by the apostles, if in fact they were considered to be deacons. The role of the deacon may also be referred to in 1 Corinthians 12:28 as “helps (ἀντιλήψεις)” and “administrations (κυβερνήσεις).” Based on the witness of the early church, we do not have any verification that the

deacons were engaged in teaching until the third century A.D.<sup>29</sup> While in 1 Timothy bishops are required to be “apt to teach (διδασκτικόν)” (3:2), the absence of such a requirement for deacons supports the idea that teaching was not a part of, or not essential to, the office of deacon at the time of Paul.

After Paul indicates that a woman is not to teach or have authority over a man in 1 Timothy chapter 2, he then gives the qualifications for a bishop and deacons in chapter 3. While it is customary in recent years for LCMS documents to indicate that Paul’s words only have application to the office of pastor, the fact is that right after Paul’s words regarding women teaching and having authority in chapter 2, the requirements for not only the pastor but also for the deacons are given. Therefore Paul’s directions in chapter 2 cannot refer only to the office of the pastor, for the requirements of a pastor are presented together with the requirements of a deacon. The requirements for deacons listed in chapter 3 together with those for a bishop show that Paul’s words would have to have broader application than just the pastoral office. CTCR 1985 asserts that “the terms ‘teach’ and ‘exercise authority’” in 1 Timothy 2:12 “are intentionally linked. The kind of teaching referred to in the passage is tied to exercising authority. . . . One cannot divorce the phrase ‘nor have authority over a man’ from the pastoral office and then apply it in rather arbitrary ways” (p. 35). The truth is that Paul’s placement of the requirements of a deacon with the requirements of the pastor after 1 Timothy 2:12 shows that the term “teach” is a subset of the broader term “exercise authority.” While a pastor would teach and also exercise authority more broadly (e.g., in administering the sacraments and carrying out excommunications), a deacon was seen to exercise authority without teaching and apart from the worshipping assembly, for example, in administering the distribution of money to the poor. Both the role of teaching and the role of exercising other kinds of authority were prohibited to women according to Paul. Also, Paul reveals that the phrase “nor have authority over a man” was not “married” to the pastoral office in the way the CTCR suggests, and Paul’s application of this phrase to the office of deacon certainly was not applied in an arbitrary way. In fact, Paul reveals that the phrase “nor have authority over a man” applies to offices that the CTCR would describe as “‘by human right’ (*iure humano*).”<sup>30</sup> The example of the apostles in Acts 6 in assigning men to the role of administering the distribution of money to the poor supports the idea that woman were not to exercise authority over men even in offices or functions which are, according to the CTCR, “‘by human right’ (*iure humano*).”<sup>31</sup> The CTCR, in trying to affix the basis for interpreting 1 Timothy 2:11-12 to the phrase “household of God” in 1 Timothy 3:15, not only forces a wrong understanding on the phrase, but also ignores the context, reality, and import of

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<sup>29</sup> See James Monroe Barnett, *The Diaconate: A Full and Equal Order* (rev. ed.; Valley Forge, Pa: Trinity Press International, 1995), 43–64.

<sup>30</sup> CTCR 1994, p. 5.

<sup>31</sup> Whether these or similar offices and functions are established “by human right” is debatable, since in Acts 6:3 the apostles command that such men be chosen, using the imperative ἐπισκέψασθε, and themselves appoint them to the task with the laying on of hands (6:6). This suggests that offices that are established to enable pastors to be devoted to prayer and the ministry of the Word (6:4) could be seen as actually falling into the category of what the CTCR calls “‘by divine right’ (*iure divino*)” (CTCR 1994, p. 5).

the Word of God that occurs between these two sections and that clearly shows that Paul is not restricting his words only to the pastoral office.

We see that within the verses that give requirements for deacons (3:8–12), Paul also gives requirements either for the wives of deacons (and possibly the wives of bishops) or for deaconesses. He says, “In the same way [it is necessary for] the women/wives (γυναῖκας) [to be] holy, not slanderers, sober-minded/sober, faithful in all things” (3:11). Again, based on the connection of chapter 2 with chapter 3, the conclusion is that these women, however they are interpreted, are not to be engaged in teaching or exercising authority over men, but are in this regard “to be in silence/quietness (ἡσυχία).”

After stating the principle regarding the silence or quietness of women in teaching or exercising authority over men, Paul then shows that his directives are grounded in two facts. He states,

For Adam **as a first one** (πρῶτος) was formed, then (εἶτα) Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman (γυνή), by being deceived, has entered (γέγονεν) **into the state of transgression.**

Paul does not ground or suggest that he is grounding his instructions in the cultural patterns of his day. Rather, he grounds his directions regarding the relationship of man to woman in the order of creation. Instead of using an adverb to indicate that Adam was formed “first” (πρῶτον),<sup>32</sup> Paul uses an adjective (πρῶτος). With this construction he may be conveying that not only was Adam formed first, but that he was formed “as a first one,” namely, Adam was formed as the one being first in rank. Paul uses the same adjective in a similar way in 1:15, where he says that he (i.e., Paul) is “a first (πρῶτος)” or “a foremost” one of sinners (see also 1:16). The construction that Paul uses in regard to Adam is different than the one he uses of deacons, where he says in 3:10, “And also these let be tested first (πρῶτον), then (εἶτα) let them serve as deacons.” With the deacons Paul is not suggesting that they are tested as “first ones.” He is pointing only to order in time, i.e., first testing then serving. With Adam however, Paul is pointing to both order and rank. Regardless of whether one takes the adjective “first” (πρῶτος) as indicating order or rank or both, the force of Paul’s logic shows that the order of creation is tied to rank. The order of creation is not just an incidental matter. It reveals who is to be the ruling gender.

It is clear from Paul’s words that the order of creation is not being considered in terms of a husband to his wife, but in terms of the male gender to the female gender. That Adam was formed as a first one and then Eve was formed supports Paul’s point that a woman should not teach or have authority over a man. While this can include the relationship between a husband and wife, it clearly is broader than that. Again, God’s order of creation establishes the order in which he desires the male gender to relate to the female gender, not just, as a subset of this, how he desires a husband to relate to his wife. This passage of Paul is clear on this point. So, for

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<sup>32</sup> As, for example, he does in 2:1; 3:10; 5:4.



instance, if we apply Paul's general principle to the specific application of a deacon, we see that a woman cannot be a deacon because she is not to have authority over her husband, if she has one, or over any other man in the congregation who is not her husband. On the other hand, a man can be a deacon, because he can have authority not only over his wife, if he has one, but over other men in the congregation as well. The application of the order of creation by Paul transcends a husband-wife relationship (as well as a pastor-congregation relationship).

Paul's direction for a woman not to teach or have authority over a man is also grounded in the events that took place in the Fall of humanity into sin. So Paul adds the supporting point: "And Adam was not deceived, but the woman (γυνή), by being deceived, has entered (γέγονεν) **into the state of transgression.**" We know that the command to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was given by God to the man before woman was created (Gen 2:17). Nowhere in the creation account are we told that God gave this command to the woman, indicating that the man is the one who taught this command to her after she was created. When the woman was deceived by the serpent, she was deceived into thinking that the authority role of the man, in this case in relation to teaching, was not trustworthy or something to which she needed to submit. Instead, she was deceived into thinking that she should take over the authority role, teaching her husband that the fruit was good and beneficial to eat, that he had been wrong, and directing him to eat with her. Therefore the woman (and by implication all women thereafter) lives in the result of the transgression against God that occurred because she did not trust and submit to the authority role of the man. The man, on the other hand, (and all men hereafter) lives in the result of the transgression against God that occurred because he did not fulfill his role of authority, but instead let the woman speak to Satan without intervening as the head, let her do as she pleased, and even followed her direction. While Adam is not in Paul's direct focus in the 1 Timothy passage, he makes it clear in Romans that the man, as the head, bears the full responsibility for the fall, saying, "through one man sin entered the world," later identifying that one man as "Adam" (Rom 5:4, 14). While the woman was deceived into thinking the ordering of God was not to be trusted, Adam was not deceived, he knew exactly what was going on. He sinned because he failed to live in his proper role.

To summarize, Paul's argument in 1 Timothy passage we are considering goes like this: A woman should not teach or have authority over a man because it is the man's role to teach and exercise authority over the woman. This is shown by the order of creation. That man was created first proves that man is to be in the ruling position. Furthermore, keep in mind that it was when the woman was deceived into not trusting in this ordering of God that she sinned, bringing the consequences of that sin upon all women. Let's not go down that path again, for it will lead to nothing good. God's ordering can be trusted.

Having shown that the proper role of a woman is not to teach or have authority over a man, Paul then goes on to indicate what the proper God-pleasing role of a woman is. He says,

But she will be saved through childbearing, if they remain in faith and love and holiness/sanctification with chastity/self-control (σωφροσύνης).

One way to deal with this passage is to strip it of having any implications for women bearing children in Paul's time or today. This is done by suggesting that when Paul says that the woman "will be saved through childbearing" he is only making a reference to the fact that women will be saved through the bearing of a child, namely, the bearing of Christ. The reasoning with this interpretation suggests that because Paul brought up the transgression of the woman, he now is pointing her to her savior from that transgression. While it is of course theologically true that Christ saves from sin, there are several indicators that this is not what Paul is intending with this verse.

First, the woman is not the only one who needs to be saved from her transgression. Paul mentions both Adam and Eve in the previous verse. While he states that the woman fell into transgression *by means of being deceived*, the reader would think of Adam also falling into transgression, albeit *not by being deceived*. To suggest that Paul needed to point women, but not Adam, to their savior from sin, would suggest that Adam was somehow not guilty of sin during the Fall. This would be to suggest a difference in goodness between man and woman. When Paul mentions the headship role of a man to a woman in 1 Corinthians, he adds balance to his words by showing that both have valuable roles. He says, "Nevertheless neither the woman is without the man nor the man without the woman in the Lord. For as the woman is from the man, in the same way also the man is through the woman. And all things are from God" (1 Cor 11:11–12). Given the fact that in 1 Timothy Paul is also dealing with roles of man and woman, pointing to the ruling role of man, one would expect Paul to say something like "while the woman sinned by being deceived, nevertheless, both man and woman will be saved through childbearing." While interpreting being "saved through childbearing" as being "saved through the bearing of Christ by Mary" would point to the exalted role of one woman, the implication of women being sinners and needing a savior, with no mention of men's need for the same, would portray an imbalance in emphasis on the sin, rather than the manner of sinning, of the woman.

Another potential obstacle with interpreting being "saved through childbearing" as being "saved through the bearing of Christ" is the absence of the word "Christ." Also, no one is saved through *Mary's act of bearing* Christ. Rather, salvation comes through Christ alone, as Paul makes clear in the previous verses of 1:15 and 2:5–6. Even in Genesis 3:15, the emphasis is not on the woman but the seed of the woman who crushes the serpent's head. In a sense, Mary has no more part in salvation than does Adam, for the flesh of Mary ultimately comes from Adam, being passively received from God. Nevertheless, Mary is God's instrument for bringing Christ into the world, and her giving birth to Jesus is part of the way the Savior enters the world. Only with this understanding could someone be seen as being "saved through the bearing of Christ."

A further strike against the interpretation that we are considering is the fact that the first person to propose it was Origen.<sup>33</sup> Like the opponents of the truth that are present at Ephesus and have a disparaging view of marriage, so Origen seemed to hold marriage in low esteem. In order to live the celibate life, Origen castrated himself. It is no wonder why he needed to see Paul's

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<sup>33</sup> Origen *Fr. Luc.* 32c.1-4.

words of being “saved through childbearing” as pointing to something other than a continuing recognition of the value of marriage. He apparently tried to accomplish this by interpreting the passage in reference to Christ’s birth, an interpretation that others subsequent to him have picked up on. However, even for Origen who attempted to hinder marriage and procreation and for those today for whom this passage of Paul goes against their contraceptive lifestyle and who seek to ease their consciences through interpreting it away, the fact is that even Origen’s interpretation comes back on his and their head. For if being “saved through childbearing” refers to being “saved through the bearing of Christ by Mary,” then our focus is drawn to the most exalted woman on earth. And she is most exalted, not for her role as a doctor or a lawyer or a church officer or a deaconess, but for her role as the mother of God. Yes, she is most exalted precisely for her role as *mother*. With this interpretation, therefore, rather than taking the focus off of motherhood, Paul would be exalting it to the highest degree.

The Lutheran Confessions provide an interpretation of the passage we are considering that has strong support from the context of 1 Timothy as a whole. In Article XXIII of the *Apology of the Augsburg Confession*, “The Marriage of Priests” (1530–31 AD), we read,

Likewise, 1 Timothy 2[:15], “she will be saved through childbearing. . . .” If our opponents could produce such passages about celibacy, then they could indeed stage a wonderful victory celebration. Paul says that a woman is saved through childbearing. In contrast to the hypocrisy of celibacy, what greater honor could he bestow than to say that woman is saved by the conjugal functions themselves, by conjugal intercourse, by childbirth, and by her other domestic duties? But what does Paul mean? Let the reader observe that faith is added and that the domestic duties are not praised apart from faith: “provided they continue,” he says, “in faith.” For he is speaking about the entire class of mothers. Therefore, he especially requires faith, by which a woman receives the forgiveness of sins and justification. Then he adds a particular work of her calling, just as in every human creature a good work of a particular calling ought to follow faith. This work pleases God on account of faith. Thus the duties of a woman please God on account of faith, and a believing woman who faithfully serves in these duties of her calling is saved.<sup>34</sup>

The Lutheran Confessions interpret being “saved through childbearing” as referring to a woman being saved who serves in her calling of having children if she remains in faith. As has been mentioned, the false teaching in Ephesus included a low view of marriage and children. Instead of getting married, we know that some of the young widows apparently thought they were living a more God-pleasing lifestyle by staying single and going around from house to house teaching. Later in 1 Timothy, Paul will instruct such women to “enter into marriage, keep bearing children, keep managing the home, keep giving not one occasion to the adversary for reproach, for already some have turned aside after Satan” (1 Tim 5:14–15). In line with this later instruction, Paul, in 1 Timothy 2, after making it clear that women are not to teach or have authority over a man, then points them to what their God-pleasing role is, namely, to be given to bearing children. The fact

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<sup>34</sup> Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000), 252.32.

is that if women are given to bearing children, if they are given to letting the little children come to Jesus and not preventing them (Mark 10:14), they will have neither the time nor the desire to seek to take over men's roles of exercising authority or other roles of men by which a family is supported. If women are given to living in the exalted role of mother and to managing the home, little challenging of men's roles would occur. On the other hand, where women hold motherhood in low regard, preventing or limiting children, where women flee the home as their greatest sphere of influence, it is no wonder that they will, with their extra time, find themselves more and more moving into the man's proper realm, as was the case in Ephesus. Where this happens, God's ordered roles of men and women become disregarded.

Two points should be made regarding women being "saved through childbearing, if they remain in faith and love and holiness/sanctification with chastity/self-control (σωφροσύνης)." First, Paul is referring to women in the marriage situation or who will enter the matrimonial estate. He is indicating that being married and having children is the main station in life to which women have been called. Second, he does not have in focus women who are celibate or women who cannot have children. He is rather making a statement about the typical role of a woman. We see Paul speak in a similar way in chapter 3, where, regarding the qualifications of a bishop, he says that he must be the "man/husband of one woman/wife" and "one who is ruling well his own household, by having his children in subjection with all dignity (on his part)" (3:2,4). By saying these things, Paul is not implying that only a person who is married and has children can be a bishop. Rather, he is addressing the typical situation of a person who becomes a bishop, not, however, thereby indicating that a single or celibate man is forbidden from serving in this role.

A related but somewhat different interpretation of "But she will be saved through childbearing, if they remain in faith and love and holiness/sanctification with chastity/self-control" is given by Chrysostom. Chrysostom sees the "she" as referring to the woman and the "they" as referring to the children. One could, however, see the "they" as referring to both the mother and her children. With such an understanding the focus would be put upon the woman as having an important responsibility, not only in the bearing of children, but in the raising up of the children in the faith. As the one who spends great amounts of time with the children when they are little and the father is working, the mother has a great purpose and influence on the children as regards the shaping of their lives. Such an interpretation would not negate the responsibility and role of the father in raising the children in the faith, but would highlight the important role that the mother occupies.

Further support that Paul is in 1 Timothy chapter 2 giving general principles that have application both within and outside of the gathering of Christians is found in the subsequent chapter. In chapter 3 Paul gives the requirements of bishops, deacons, and deaconesses or wives of deacons (and bishops?). The bishop is not only to be "irreproachable, the man/husband of one woman/wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, skillful in teaching, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, but forbearing, peaceable, not greedy" (3:2-3) when gathered with Christians, but in his entire life. He is to have his children in submission not only in the Christian assembly, but wherever they are (3:4). In fact, he is "to have a good testimony from the ones

who are outside” (3:7). The deacons are not only to be “reverent, not double-tongued, not occupying themselves with much wine, not fond of dishonest gain, having the mystery of the faith in a clear conscience” (3:8–9) among Christians, but at all times. They too are to be “men/husbands of one women/wife” and to rule “well their children and the ones of their own houses” (3:12) not only when Christians come together, but always. In the same way, the wives of deacons (and bishops?) or the deaconesses are not only to be “holy, not slanderers, sober-minded/sober, faithful in all things” (3:11) when with Christians, but throughout their lives.