

What We Teach

THE CHURCH

God's Plan for Women in the Church ([1 Timothy 2:9-15](#))

[1 Timothy 2:9-15 \(NASB\)](#)

- ⁹ “Likewise, *I want* women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments,
¹⁰ but rather by means of good works, as is proper for women making a claim to godliness.
¹¹ A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness.
¹² But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet.
¹³ For it was Adam who was first created, *and* then Eve.
¹⁴ And *it was* not Adam *who* was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.
¹⁵ But *women* will be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.”

Under the pretense of gathering to worship God, women were flaunting themselves and becoming serious distractions from worship. Their actions revealed that the intent of their heart was evil. Since worship is central to the life of the church, it was high on Paul's list of issues for Timothy to confront.

Following his discussion of the role of the men when the church is called to evangelistic prayer ([1 Timothy 2:1-8](#)), Paul turns to the subject of women in worship. He addresses their 1) appearance, 2) attitude, 3) testimony, 4) role, 5) design, and 6) contribution.

1) The Appearance of Women

[1 Timothy 2:9a, c \(NASB\)](#)

- ⁹ “**Likewise**” [**hōsautōs=in the same way**], *I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments.*”

2) The Attitude of Women

[1 Timothy 2:9d \(NASB\)](#)

- ⁹ “Likewise” *I want* women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, **modestly** [**Aidōs= in reverence**] and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments.”

3) The Testimony of Women

1 Timothy 2:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ “But rather by means of good works, as is proper for women making a claim to godliness.”

1 Timothy 2:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ “But rather by means of **good** [*Agathōn* = genuinely good, not merely good in appearance] works, as is proper for women **making a claim** [*epangellō*, which means “to make a public announcement.”] to godliness [*theosebeia* = which refers to reverence to God].”

4) The Role of Women

1 Timothy 2:11-12 (NASB)

¹¹ “A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness.

¹² **But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet.”**

It may seem obvious to us that women should be taught God’s Word, since they are spiritually equal in Christ and the commands of the New Testament are to all (**1 Peter 2:1-2**).

1 Peter 2:1-2 (NASB)

¹ “Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander,

² **like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation.”**

It was not at all obvious, however, to those who came from a Jewish background. First-century Judaism did not hold women in high esteem. While not barred from attending synagogue, neither were they encouraged to learn. In fact, most rabbis refused to teach women, and some likened it to throwing pearls to pigs.

Nor was the status of women in Greek society much better. **William Barclay** writes, “The respectable Greek woman led a very confined life. She lived in her own quarters into which no one but her husband came. She did not even appear at meals. She never at any time appeared on the street alone; she never went to any public assembly.” (*The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1975], 67)

The existence of such a mind-set at Ephesus may have contributed to the reaction of the women against such denigration. Unfortunately, some went too far, overreacting to their suppression by seeking a dominant position. Before Paul confronts that overreaction, however, he affirms their right to learn.

The prevalent Jewish tradition about women did not come from the Old Testament. The Old Testament affirmed that women have a spiritual status equal to that of men. The Mosaic law was given to all Israel, women as well as men (**Deuteronomy 1:1**).

Deuteronomy 1:1 (NASB)

¹ “These are the words which Moses spoke to all Israel across the Jordan in the wilderness, in the Arabah opposite Suph, between Paran and Tophel and Laban and Hazeroth and Dizahab.”

Both were to teach it to their children ([Deuteronomy 6:4-7](#); [Proverbs 6:20](#)).

Deuteronomy 6:4-7 (NASB)

⁴ “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!

⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

⁶ These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart.

⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.”

Proverbs 6:20 (NASB)

²⁰ “My son, observe the commandment of your father And do not forsake the teaching of your mother.”

The protection of the law applied equally to women (cf. [Exodus 21:28-32](#)).

Exodus 21:28-32 (NASB)

²⁸ “If an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox shall surely be stoned and its flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall go unpunished.

²⁹ If, however, an ox was previously in the habit of goring and its owner has been warned, yet he does not confine it and it kills a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned and its owner also shall be put to death.

³⁰ If a ransom is demanded of him, then he shall give for the redemption of his life whatever is demanded of him.

³¹ Whether it gores a son or a daughter, it shall be done to him according to the same rule.

³² If the ox gores a male or female slave, the owner shall give his *or her* master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.”

Women had inheritance rights ([Numbers 36:1-12](#)).

Numbers 36:1-12 (NASB)

¹ “And the heads of the fathers’ *households* of the family of the sons of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, of the families of the sons of Joseph, came near and spoke before Moses and before the leaders, the heads of the fathers’ *households* of the sons of Israel,

² and they said, “The LORD commanded my lord to give the land by lot to the sons of Israel as an inheritance, and my lord was commanded by the LORD to give the inheritance of Zelophehad our brother to his daughters.

³ But if they marry one of the sons of the *other* tribes of the sons of Israel, their inheritance will be withdrawn from the inheritance of our fathers and will be added to the inheritance of the tribe to which they belong; thus it will

be withdrawn from our allotted inheritance.

⁴ When the jubilee of the sons of Israel comes, then their inheritance will be added to the inheritance of the tribe to which they belong; so their inheritance will be withdrawn from the inheritance of the tribe of our fathers.”

⁵ Then Moses commanded the sons of Israel according to the word of the LORD, saying, ‘The tribe of the sons of Joseph are right in *their* statements.

⁶ This is what the LORD has commanded concerning the daughters of Zelophehad,’ saying, ‘Let them marry whom they wish; only they must marry within the family of the tribe of their father.’

⁷ Thus no inheritance of the sons of Israel shall be transferred from tribe to tribe, for the sons of Israel shall each hold to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers.

⁸ Every daughter who comes into possession of an inheritance of any tribe of the sons of Israel shall be wife to one of the family of the tribe of her father, so that the sons of Israel each may possess the inheritance of his fathers.

⁹ Thus no inheritance shall be transferred from one tribe to another tribe, for the tribes of the sons of Israel shall each hold to his own inheritance.

¹⁰ Just as the LORD had commanded Moses, so the daughters of Zelophehad did:

¹¹ Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad married their uncles' sons.

¹² They married *those* from the families of the sons of Manasseh the son of Joseph, and their inheritance remained with the tribe of the family of their father.”