

## Paul's Epistles to Individuals

### Lesson 5 – 1 Timothy 2:8-15

#### I. Prayer is Required (v. 8)

Here Paul presents the expectation of prayer in a specific context. Earlier in Verse 1, the command to pray for all is generally presented. In Verse 2, the specific expectation to pray for earthly leaders is mentioned. Here, the command to pray is specific to a particular circumstance.

##### A. *"Men" to Pray*

The Greek word in v. 8 is not the same as in v. 1 or v. 5. Whereas the word in v. 1 and v. 5 is a generic word that is not gender specific (Gr. "Anthropos") and refers to mankind or human beings, the word in v. 8 (Gr. "Aner") always refers to the masculine gender. The instruction here seems specific for male Christians. In the context of the following verses, it is clear that instructions for female Christians are also specifically mentioned. Therefore, beginning in v. 8, Paul seems to begin instructions for Christians in the local church and the administration of the local church worship and business that continues into Chapter 3. "Men" are exclusively commanded to pray here and not women so we are considering public prayer.

##### B. *In Every Place*

Not just in the synagogue as was the Jewish view but where ever Christians assemble. Jesus instructed the woman at the well that soon to come was a time wherein the physical location of worship would no longer be important (**John 4:19-24**).

##### C. *Lifting Up Holy Hands*

Many tend to focus on the "lifting" here as though it were a mandated posture for praying when the emphasis is more on the "holy" hands. The "lifting" here is the Gr. "epairo" and it is used both literally and figuratively in the New Testament. (See **Matt 17:8**; **Luke 6:20**; **Luke 16:23** regarding "eyes", **Luke 21:28** regarding the "head", **John 13:18** regarding the metaphorical "heel", and **2 Cor. 10:2**, **2 Cor. 11:20** regarding the negative exaltation by pride). Although it was certainly a custom to raise hands in prayer (**Neh. 8:6**, **Psa. 141:2**), this is no command to pray with physically elevated hands. It is instead the emphasis of showing, displaying or exalting one's "Holy" hands in prayer. Those who lead prayer should have "holy" hands, unstained by sin (*"Nevertheless the righteous shall hold to his way, And he who has clean hands shall grow stronger and stronger"* – **Job 17:9**. *"Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? And who may stand in His holy place? 4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood, And has not sworn deceitfully"* – **Psa 24:3-4**. *"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded"* – **James 4:8**). As an *"elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession"* (**1 Pet. 2:9**), one should never attempt to exercise this priestly function while having a life stained with sin.

##### D. *Without Wrath and Dissension (Doubting)*

Anger and doubts have no place in the administration of God's business. A proper attitude of heart is a requirement. God does not hear sinners (**John 9:31**) but the prayer of a righteous man is effective (**James 5:16**). Grumbling and disputing is divisive and destructive, ruins influence and is to be avoided (**Phili 2:14**). A prayer is to be offered absent these things.

## II. Instructions for Women (vs. 9-15)

In contrast to verse 8, which contained instructions for men, these verses focus on women. Godly men are to pray as described and now, Godly women are to heed these instructions.

### A. *Adorn Themselves Properly (vs. 9-10)*

Most have heard many sermons on modesty that focus on women dressing in a way that does not accentuate their physical appearance and sexuality. These sermons are needed and appropriate but these verses are more meaningful than just this perspective. They are really about women adorning themselves, not with physical accessories that draw attention to physical appearance, but instead with good works that show the inner, spiritual qualities of the person, not rooted in pride (see **Isa. 3:16-23**). To “adorn” is a purposeful action. It doesn’t happen accidentally. The words “adorn” and “modest” are almost the same in the Greek (kosmeo and kosmios). They both have the idea of decorum. To decorate in an orderly way. To “snuff a wick”, indicating the idea of limiting notice. Not a blanket prohibition against braided hair or jewelry but against drawing undue attention. Although we commonly think of modesty in a sexual context, the prohibition is toward wild fashion, hairstyles or excessive jewelry even if over exposure of the body is not involved. An unbalanced desire to be noticed, either through appearance or behavior can be immodest. In the context of public worship (and to some extent in life), women are to be noticed not for their outward appearance or commanding actions but for their reverence and adoration of God, illustrated in their “*making a claim to Godliness*”.

### B. *Women’s Silence (vs. 11-12)*

There can be no doubt that the woman’s role in the business of the God in the local church is one of quiet submission (**1 Cor. 14:33-35**). Unfortunately, many in our society discount this direct teaching because they view it as devaluing women. This is not a measure of value at all. It is a definition of role. Women are appointed by God to do things not appointed to men just as men are appointed to do things not appointed of women. Teammates in God’s Kingdom, neither are more valuable than the other. **Proverbs 31** paints a picture of a confident, effective and Godly woman who is worth more than any earthy thing (**v. 10, 1 Pet. 3:1-6**). Silence here is conditional, defined by the premise that they must not usurp authority over a man in the business of the local church. Hence public teaching is prohibited and the taking of leadership roles. The word “quietly” here (“silence” in KJV) is translated as “quiet” in **1 Thess. 4:11** and “quietness” in **2 Thess. 3:12**. It does not mean absolute silence as does the word in **1 Cor. 14:34**. Even in **1 Cor. 14:34**, there are obvious exceptions for women to sing or confess sins so as to fulfill other commands. Women are not to usurp authority over men and it is not possible to lead public prayer, teach, or speak out in the worship without doing so. Women must take care, even in apparently innocuous circumstances, to obey this directive. Men must be cautious to not cause a woman to violate this command by drawing out her comment in worship. The statement, “*I suffer not a woman to teach, nor usurp authority*” (**v. 12 KJV**), is a prohibition against teaching in a way that usurps authority over a man. (“nor” = Gr “oude”).

### C. *The Woman is of the Man (vs. 13-15)*

**1 Cor. 11:8-11** further describes that man was first created but man and woman are not independent of each other. Though Eve was deceived in the Garden, Adam knew better and sinned anyway (**v. 14, Gen. 3:17-19**). But, the work given to woman, including child-bearing, is high indeed. Through a woman (not an earthy man), Christ came. But child-bearing is not a means to salvation but part of the honorable and essential role of women. A role men cannot fill. For men and women, to fulfill the role assigned by God is a high calling and pleasing to Him.