

On Mission  
June 9, 2019  
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1 Timothy 2

Opening: What do David Platt, Beth Moore, and President Trump have in common? All have been the subjects of two controversies in the past two weeks that involve 2 Timothy chapter two – our lesson text for today. I'll explain each situation as we move through the text.

This chapter comes with some challenges in interpretation that Bible teachers and scholars still debate today. The main topic is Paul's instruction to Timothy on how the church should conduct itself in corporate worship. Under that "umbrella" Paul touches on these issues:

- Prayer is a key element in worship (that's pretty straightforward.)
- We should pray for all people to be saved (of course!)
- We should pray for those in authority even if we don't agree with them. In first century Ephesus it was the evil Roman emperor Nero (that's a little harder.)
- How should women dress for worship (careful, Paul!)
- What is the proper role of women when it comes to leadership and teaching in the church (here comes the controversy.)
- Paul uses words like "quietness" and "submission" in reference to the women in the church (can we just study the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm instead?)

The Big Idea of this lesson is really FOUR Big Ideas:

- Big Idea #1: Styles of worship may vary, but God's word gives us specific essentials for how the church should conduct itself in corporate worship.
- Big Idea #2: It is God's will that we should pray for the salvation of all people and for His wisdom and blessing on those in authority.
- Big Idea #3: Every believer is equally important in God's eyes; yet there are differences in the roles of men and women in the church.

- Big Idea #4: Some passages in scripture are harder to interpret than others -- yet, if we believe scripture to be God's inspired word to us, we must "toil" with and not disregard those passages to avoid controversy.
- In the middle of instructing Timothy on how to deal with false teachers in the church at Ephesus, Paul shifted to the topic of corporate worship.

<sup>1</sup> First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, <sup>2</sup> for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.

- When we think of worship we think mainly of praise and preaching. Paul makes it clear that prayer is a fundamental element of worship.
- He describes several types of prayer: supplications (entreaties) – praying for the needs of all. Prayers – reverence as we acknowledge we're drawing near to God. Intercessions (petitions) – praying on behalf of others – especially the lost. Thanksgiving for God and what He's done.
- We are to pray for "all people" not just people like us.
- We are to pray for those in authority even if we disagree with them.
- If God blesses and directs our leaders, we will ALL be blessed.
- Last Sunday at McClean Bible Church in Virginia, President Trump showed up unannounced. Pastor David Platt had to make a quick "call" on how to handle this. He decided to call the President on stage and prayed over him. The President did not speak. Here is a portion of the prayer:

*"O God, we praise you as the one universal king over all. You are our leader and our Lord and we worship you. There is one God and one Savior—and it's you, and your name is Jesus...we stand right now on behalf of our president, and we pray for your grace and your mercy and your wisdom upon him.*

*God, we pray that he would know how much you love him—so much that you sent Jesus to die for his sins, our sins—so we pray that he would look to you. That he would trust in you, that he would lean on*

*you. That he would govern and make decisions in ways that are good for justice, and good for righteousness, and good for equity, every good path.*

*Lord we pray, we pray, that you would give him all the grace he needs to govern in ways that we just saw in 1 Timothy 2 that lead to peaceful and quiet lives, godly and dignified in every way.”<sup>i</sup>*

- Platt also said, *“While I won’t go into the details of our conversation backstage, one of our other pastors and I spoke the gospel in a way that I pray was clear, forthright, and compassionate.”<sup>ii</sup>*
- Some have been critical that Platt gave the President a “photo op.” Clearly there was push-back within his congregation because Platt wrote a letter of explanation to his church. <https://www.mcleanbible.org/prayer-president>
- This week he’s been criticized for writing the letter and defended by some.
- What is not up for debate is this scripture calls on us to pray for those in authority regardless of whether we agree with them or not. Here’s why:

<sup>3</sup> This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, <sup>4</sup> who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.<sup>5</sup> For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. <sup>7</sup> For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

- We are to pray for the salvation of all people recognizing that there is only one way to be reconciled to God, our “one mediator” Jesus Christ.
- Then Paul turned to the proper preparation for prayer.

<sup>8</sup> I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling;

- Paul singled out the men, but his admonition applies to us all.

- We can only lift “holy hands” if our hearts and our hands are clean!

Psalm 66:18 (ESV) makes it clear, <sup>18</sup> If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.

- Our prayers will also not be effective if we have a heart of “anger or quarreling.”

Jesus said in Mark 11:25 (ESV)

<sup>25</sup> And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.”

- We see that prayer is fundamental to the effectiveness of the local church!

Warren Wiersbe: *“When a local church ceases to depend on prayer, God ceases to bless its ministry.”* <sup>iii</sup>

- After challenging the men on the subject of proper prayer, Paul turns to the women who were coming to worship at the church in Ephesus:

<sup>9</sup> likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, <sup>10</sup> but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works.

- Paul was not condemning stylish, appropriate wardrobe, hair, and makeup, but calling for appropriate, modest dress in the church services.
- ESV Study Bible: *“...the principle is that women should not dress ostentatiously or seductively, but in a way that is proper.”* <sup>iv</sup>
- MacArthur says this also speaks to women in that culture who *“wore costly garments”* [that could] *“draw attention to themselves and away from the Lord, likely causing the poorer*

women to be envious.”<sup>v</sup> The point: don't flaunt your wealth and distract people from worshipping the Lord.

- It's clear Paul was reinforcing that the true beauty of the women is based on the internal (heart) and not the external (clothing and cosmetics.)

<sup>11</sup> Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness.

- Now we're getting into controversy. Some translations render this, "learn in silence." The word here is more accurately translated, "learn quietly."
- One theory: *"It could be that as women experienced new freedoms within the Christian community, they began to throw off restraint. Their disagreements, questions, and assertions then became not a learning experience but a disruption that worked against true worship. Paul did not want the women to be contentious. His main concern was the establishment of orderly worship."*<sup>vi</sup>
- Paul wasn't saying women shouldn't speak in church because "[He] elsewhere indicates that women do speak in other ways in the church assembly (see 1 Cor. 11:5)."<sup>vii</sup>
- Verses 12-14 are very controversial. We need to acknowledge other places in scripture that affirm men and women are equal as individuals in God's sight, and that women have a significant role in ministry:

In Galatians 3:28 (ESV) Paul wrote:

<sup>28</sup> There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

- *"There were devoted women who ministered to Jesus in the days of His earthly ministry (Luke 8:1–3). They were present at His crucifixion and burial, and it was a woman who first heralded the glorious news of His resurrection.*
- *In the Book of Acts we meet Dorcas (Acts 9:36ff), Lydia (Acts 16:14ff), Priscilla (Acts 18:1–3), and godly women in the Berean and Thessalonian churches (Acts 17:4, 12). Paul greeted at least eight women in Romans 16; and Phebe, who carried the*

*Roman epistle to its destination, was a deaconess in a local church (Rom. 16:1).”<sup>viii</sup>*

- Clearly the New Testament documents women who played significant roles in ministry. Okay, then what did Paul mean by verse twelve?

<sup>12</sup> I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet.

- There are several possible explanations:
  - Women can only teach other women and/or children.
  - Women can teach but not during the “sermon.”
  - Women can teach but not be the authority/leader of a mixed group.
  - Women can teach but not in the role of pastor/elder.
- A recent controversy involving Beth Moore occurred when she tweeted on Mothers’ Day that she had taught in a church. She didn’t say she “preached” but some took it that way. Last Sunday she clearly DID speak during a worship service.<sup>ix</sup>
- This set off a firestorm of social media back and forth between Beth Moore and Owen Strachan, professor of Christian theology at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo.
- He tweeted, *“For a woman to teach and preach to adult men is to defy God’s Word and God’s design,”*
- Others chimed in and Beth Moore responded, *“Being asked by pastors & their elders on occasion to address their congregations does not mean that the woman -coming by their invitation, mind you -wants to pastor their church. Troubled brothers, try to relax. I do not see a female takeover on the horizon. Have some herbal tea.”<sup>x</sup>*
- What do Southern Baptists believe as a denomination? The Baptist Faith and Message states: *“While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.”<sup>xi</sup>*
- Since I have (with the church’s blessing) featured female guest teachers in our class, I think you know where I stand on Sunday School teaching. Many churches permit females to teach or co-teach in Bible study as long as the leader of the class is a man.

- If you'd like to know what the current President of the SBC thinks, here's a link to an article: <https://jdgreear.com/blog/can-women-teach-in-the-church/>
- This is a matter that requires much prayer and a whole lot of grace. While we should not compromise what we feel the Holy Spirit has revealed to us about this passage, we MUST not be ugly and unkind to those who see it differently.
- IMPORTANT: This verse applies to church teaching and leadership and NOT to a woman in leadership in the workplace or in government.
- Paul further complicates the life of Bible study teachers in verses 13-15:

<sup>13</sup> For Adam was formed first, then Eve; <sup>14</sup> and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.

<sup>15</sup> Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control.

- I don't believe Paul was saying Eve was more gullible than Adam.
- We all know from life experience that men are equally susceptible to Satan's lies and often times, men are MORE susceptible. I believe Paul is speaking about the order of creation and the order of the family.
- By the way, Adam sinned with eyes wide open and other scripture lays the fall of man squarely at Adam's feet (Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:21.)
- Verse 15: How can a woman be saved through childbearing? Scripture's teaching on salvation by grace and not works would dispel this theory. Again, this is too deep for our lesson (see these footnotes <sup>xii</sup> )
- Some scholars believe Paul is speaking to a woman's unique role as a mother and wife and the gospel influence she can have on her children and husband.

So, What's the Takeaway?

- Styles of worship may vary, but God's word gives us specific essentials for how the church should conduct itself in corporate worship.

- It is God's will that we should pray for the salvation of all people and for His wisdom and blessing on those in authority.
- Every believer is equally important in God's eyes; yet there are differences in the roles of men and women in the church.
- Some passages in scripture are harder to interpret than others - - yet, if we believe scripture to be God's inspired word to us, we must "toil" with and not disregard those passages to avoid controversy.
- I would encourage you to dive DEEPER into the more controversial verses in this chapter. I've given you some extra material in the footnotes.

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/david-platt-models-pray-president/>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.mcleanbible.org/prayer-president>

<sup>iii</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 2, p. 215). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>iv</sup> Crossway Bibles. ESV Study Bible (Kindle Locations 147998-148000). Good News Publishers/Crossway Books. Kindle Edition.

<sup>v</sup> THE MACARTHUR BIBLE COMMENTARY Copyright © 2005 by John MacArthur

<sup>vi</sup> Larson, Knute. Holman New Testament Commentary - 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon: 9 . B&H Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

<sup>vii</sup> Crossway Bibles. ESV Study Bible (Kindle Locations 148038-148040). Good News Publishers/Crossway Books. Kindle Edition.

<sup>viii</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 2, p. 218). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>ix</sup> <https://religionnews.com/2019/06/05/beth-moores-ministry-reignites-debate-over-whether-women-can-preach/>

<sup>x</sup> *ibid*

<sup>xi</sup> <http://www.sbc.net/bfm2000/bfmcomparison.asp>

<sup>xii</sup> Paul clearly does not believe people can be saved in the sense of earning justification through childbearing or any other means (e.g., Eph. 2:8–9). But the NT can also use the term “saved” (Gk. *sōzō*) in the sense of progressively coming to experience all the aspects of salvation. In that sense, “salvation” is ongoing (see note on Phil. 2:12–13). A similar view is that “saved” can be understood as referring especially to the endurance and perseverance in faith that is necessary for eternal salvation (cf. Matt. 10:22; 24:13; etc.). - Crossway Bibles. ESV Study Bible (Kindle Locations 148064-148067). Good News Publishers/Crossway Books. Kindle Edition.

Other Commentary:

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Many Christians take exception with Paul's next assertion: I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man. They believe these instructions are purely cultural and that there is no application for today. There is continued debate regarding its implications. Clearly Paul did not teach that women are inferior to men. But this text does support the idea that men and women are different (some would disagree with this). These teachings about authority have nothing to do with a woman being president of the United States or a corporation. It is specifically about spiritual leadership in the church. (The same hierarchy of authority is extended to the home in Eph. 5:22–33; Col. 3:18–19; and 1 Pet. 3:1–7, with clear commands and responsibilities extended to the husband.) - Larson, Knute. Holman New Testament Commentary - 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon: 9 . B&H Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

2:13–14. Paul supported his instructions for men and women upon a theological structure which reaches back to the order of creation and sin's entrance into human affairs. It is a section which is hard to understand in its implications. Probably no teacher is totally convinced of his or her interpretation, and we should not hesitate to admit the difficulty of this section. But it is inspired of God, and so we must attempt to understand what Paul was saying. - Larson, Knute. Holman New Testament Commentary - 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon: 9 . B&H Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.