Expectations

1. Openness to New Insights
   - We do not fear truth; we pursue it.
   - Openness does not necessarily imply acceptance.
   - In fact, I expect that we will not all agree on every point.
   - Nevertheless, really listen to everyone’s comments.

2. Questioning Ideas Rigorously
   - You should feel free to ask questions.
   - The rigor, however, is directed toward the issue, not individuals.
   - Show respect to one another.

3. Study of the Bible and Supporting Literature
   - Bring your Bible.
   - The more you prepare, pray, and reflect, the more you will be blessed.

4. Faithfulness to God’s Will
   - We should faithfully apply what we discover.

5. Confidentiality of Comments
   - You should feel free to speak freely and explore ideas.
   - You can assume it, as will I.

6. Emotion
   - This issue stirs deep emotions because it cuts to our deepest identity.
   - We are male and female.

7. We’re All at a Different Place.
   - Be patient and allow people time to think through the issue.

8. Comfort with Medical Language
   - At times, we will need to describe different body parts and functions of males and females.
   - You need to be comfortable hearing and using that language.

9. Let me know.
   - If these expectations do not work for you, then you need to let me know.

10. Excitement of Discovery
    - There is nothing I enjoy more than studying God’s Word!
Instructions: Put a "C" beside those items that are "cultural" and a "P" beside those items that are "permanent." Count up the total number of P's. Think about why you made the decisions you made.

1. Greet one another with a holy kiss (Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:12; 1 Thess. 5:26).
3. If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out (Matt. 5:29).
4. If any one strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also (Matt. 5:39).
5. Give to him who begs from you (Matt. 5:42).
8. Lay hands on individuals when commissioning them for a specific task (Acts 6:6; 13:2).
10. Lift your hands when praying (1 Tim. 2:8).
11. Prohibit women from wearing braided hair, gold, pearls, or costly attire (1 Tim. 2:9).
12. Permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men (1 Tim. 2:12).
13. Support widows at least 60 years old with the church budget (1 Tim. 5:9).
15. Ministers should rebuke publicly elders who persist in sin (1 Tim. 5:20).
16. Drink wine for your stomach and frequent ailments (1 Tim. 5:22).
17. Let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger (James 1:19).
18. Show no favoritism to the rich (James 2:1-7).
19. Do not make any oaths (James 5:12).
20. Anoint the sick with oil (James 5:14).
21. A man should pray and prophesy with his head uncovered (1 Cor. 11:4).
22. A woman should pray and prophesy with her head covered (1 Cor. 11:5, 10).
23. Long hair on a man is degrading (1 Cor. 11:14).
24. Take the Lord's Supper in remembrance of Jesus (1 Cor. 11:24).
25. Take the Lord's Supper as part of a meal (1 Cor. 11:17-34).
26. Take the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7).
32. Sometimes take the cup before the bread (Luke 22:17-19; 1 Cor. 10:16, 21).
33. Have seven deacons (Acts 6:3).
34. Go to the synagogue on Saturday (Acts 13:14, 42, 44).
35. Have all things in common with the church (Acts 2:44).
36. Pray at fixed times (Acts 3:1).
40. Ministers should appoint elders (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5).
41. Do not own property, but meet in house churches (Acts 12:12; 16:40; Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15; Phlm. 2).
42. Don't become angry (Matt. 5:22).
43. Earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy (1 Cor. 14:1, 5).
44. Say "Amen" at the end of prayers (1 Cor. 14:16).
45. Each member should bring a song, lesson, etc. to share with the church during worship (1 Cor. 14:26).
46. Women should keep silent in the churches (1 Cor. 14:34).
47. Preach two by two (Mark 6:7).
48. Keep yourself pure (1 Tim. 5:22).
49. Tell people that unless they are born again, they cannot enter heaven (John 3:3).
50. Owe no one anything (Rom. 13:8).
51. Advise married couples to stay married and not divorce (1 Cor. 7:10-11).
52. Advise engaged couples not to seek marriage (1 Cor. 7:25-27, 37-38).
54. Call the church the "church of Christ" (Rom 16:16).
55. Sing songs, hymns, and spiritual songs (Col. 3:16).
56. Wives, be subject to your husbands (Eph. 5:22).
57. Slaves, obey your earthly masters (Eph. 6:5-8).
58. Give thanks in all circumstances (1 Thess. 5:18).
59. Do not quench the Spirit (1 Thess. 5:19).
60. When you fast, anoint your head and wash your face (Matt. 6:17).
Interpretation: Ten Basic Considerations

1. Pray.

2. Focus on the theological core.
   - 1 Corinthians 15:3-5 (Cross)
   - Matthew 23:23; Romans 14:17
   - Matthew 22:34-40
   - Ephesians 4:4-6 (The "Seven Ones")
   - Example: baptism and Romans 6:1-4

3. Begin with questions of identity (who) and purpose (why).

4. Consider the full array of theological resources.
   - Scripture
   - Reason
   - Tradition
   - Experience

5. Scripture can shape reflection, even when it is "silent." Scripture can . . .
   A. Frame the question.
   - Define the issue.
   - Supply the language.
   B. Define our identity.
   C. Describe our purpose.

Concerning Scripture
1. Consider the text in its canonical context.
   - Is there diversity on this topic in the Bible?

2. Consider the literary features of the text.
   - The type (genre) of literature
   - The presence of figurative language (e.g., hyperbole)
   - The immediate context of the passage

3. Consider the historical context of the text.
   - Is the instruction specific to the historical context?
   - Prototype (the first) vs. archetype (a model)
   - A text cannot mean what it never meant.

4. Consider the role of culture.
   - Distinguish intent from method.
   - Is this an inherently moral issue?
   - Would this question be an issue today, if the Bible did not mention it?
   - What other options were known, available, or possible?
   - Consider the reality that culture overlaps with truth (i.e., something is both permanent and cultural).

5. Consider the interpretive level at which a text is normative.
   - Rule
   - Principle
   - Paradigm
   - Understanding about God or humanity

Conclusions

1. How we interpret has often not been equal to the complexity of Scripture and real life.
2. We all interpret. The question is whether we will do it well or poorly.
3. Careful study is often difficult; think of the pain as "growing pains" and allow yourself time for growth.

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1 Tradition includes the church present and past. Consider the "fruits test" (Hays): What kinds of communities have resulted from that interpretation?
Cultural Expectations of Gender

Even a cursory reading reveals that Scripture contains numerous passages with cultural expectations of gender that most people, at least those from an American cultural context, do not follow, as the following examples illustrate.

1. Levirate marriage (Deuteronomy 25:5-10; Genesis 38; Matthew 22:23-33). Several passages prescribe or presume the practice of Levirate marriage, in which a widow marries the brother of her deceased husband to continue the family line.

2. Polygamy (Exodus 21:10-11; Deuteronomy 21:15-17). Not only are there a number of examples of polygamy, from patriarchs like Abraham and Jacob to king David and king Solomon, but the Torah itself also details provisions for marriage with and inheritance among multiple wives.

3. Wives are classed with property in the tenth commandment (Exodus 20:17). “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

4. Women are considered unclean for seven (for a son) to fourteen (for a daughter) days after childbirth (Leviticus 12:1-5).

5. Women are also considered unclean for seven days due to menstruation (Leviticus 15:19-24).

6. The Law states that men are unclean for an evening due to an emission of semen (Leviticus 15:16-18).

7. Male lives are worth more than female lives (Leviticus 27:1-8); for example, for men aged twenty to sixty years old, the equivalent value is fifty shekels of silver; for women the value is thirty shekels.

8. The Law describes a test for women suspected of adultery (Numbers 5:11-31).

9. The Law prescribes that sons receive an inheritance before daughters (Numbers 27:5-11).

10. Women captured in war must marry their captors after one month (Deuteronomy 21:10-14).

11. Newly married women shown not to be virgins are stoned to death (Deuteronomy 22:13-21).


13. Virgin women who are raped must marry their attackers (Deuteronomy 22:28-29).

14. Eunuchs are excluded from the assembly of the Lord (Deuteronomy 23:1).

15. Ezra describes endogamy, ethnic and likely religious (Ezra 9-10), and Paul counsels wives to remarry within the same faith (1 Corinthians 7:40).

16. Paul advises women in Corinth to cover their heads when praying (1 Corinthians 11:5).

17. Men are commanded to raise their hands when praying (1 Timothy 2:8).

18. Women are told not to wear gold or pearls, and to avoid braided hair (1 Timothy 2:9).
Named and Unnamed Women in the New Testament

Named Women

Women with Names
- There are 51 women with names in the New Testament.¹

Unnamed Women
(150 Individuals)

General Terms
- Woman
- Girl
- Female
- Foolish woman
- Old woman

Family
- Mother
- Barren (without child)
- Without mother
- Daughter
  - Little daughter
  - Child
- Sister
- Virgin
- Bride
- Wife
- Daughter-in-law
- Mother-in-law
- Grandmother
- Female relative
- Widow
- Adulteress

Functions
- Patron
- Disciple
- Prophetess
- Queen
- Nurse
- Maid
- Slave
- Doorkeeper
- Prostitute
- Wisdom Personified

Terms Marked as Female (Humans) in the New Testament

Named Women: 51

General
- Woman (γυνή, ἧ) – 216 times
- Girl (κοράσιον, ἧ) – 8 times
- Female
  - (γυναικεῖος, -α, ου) – 1 Pet 3:7
  - (θηλυς, -εια, -υ) – Mark 10:6; Rom 1:26, 27; Gal 3:28;
- Foolish woman (γυναικάριον, ἧ) – 2 Tim 3:6
- Old woman
  - (γρασόδης, -ες) – 1 Tim 4:7
  - (πρεσβύτις, ἧ) – Titus 2:3

Family
- Mother (μήτηρ, ἧ) – 84 times
- Without mother (αμήττωρ) – Heb 7:3
- Daughter (θυγατέρα, ἧ) – 28 times
  - Little daughter (θυγατριον, τό) – Mark 5:23; 7:25
  - Female child (παιδίς, ἧ) – Luke 8:51, 54
- Sister (αδελφή, ἧ) – 26 times
- Virgin (παρθένος, ἧ) – 13 times
- Bride (νυμφή, ἧ) – 5 times
- Wife (γυνή, ἧ)
- Daughter-in-law (νυμφή, ἧ) – 2 times
- Mother-in-law (παρθένα, ἧ) – 6 times
- Grandmother (μάμια, ἧ) – 2 Tim 1:5
- Female relative (συγγενεῖς, ἧ) – Luke 1:36
- Widow (χήρα, ἧ) – 27 times
- Adulteress (μοιχαλίς, ἧ)

Functions
- Patron (προστάτις, ἧ) – Rom 16:2
- Disciple (μαθητής, ἧ) – Acts 9:36
- Prophetess (προφητίς, ἧ) – Luke 2:36; Rev 2:20
- Queen (βασίλισσα, ἧ) – Matt 12:42; Luke 11:31; Acts 8:27; Rev 18:7
- Nurse (προφός, ἧ) – 1 Thess 2:7
- Maid (παντιδοκι, ἧ) – 14 times
- Slave (δούλη, ἧ) – Luke 1:38, 48; Acts 2:18
- Doorkeeper (θυρωρός, ἧ) – Mark 13:34; John 10:3; 18:16, 17
- Prostitute (πόρνη, ἧ) – 12 times
- Wisdom Personified (σοφία, ἧ) – 3 times

1 Only means “female child” with the feminine article.
Invisible Women

Instructions: read the following passages and circle the women whom you notice.

1. Luke 10:1
   • After this the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go.

   • Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; but they were kept from recognizing him. He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?" They stood still, their faces downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you only a visitor to Jerusalem and do not know the things that have happened there in these days?" "What things?" he asked. "About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. In addition, some women of our group amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. Then some of those with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see." He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?" They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.

3. 1 Corinthians 14:26
   • What then shall we say, brethren? When you come together, each of you has a hymn, a teaching, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up.

4. 1 Corinthians 16:15-16
   • You know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the Lord's people. I urge you, brethren, to submit to such as these and to every coworker and laborer.

5. Philippians 1:1
   • Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons.

6. James 3:1
   • Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brethren, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.
Ten Functions Women Perform in the New Testament

1. Female Deacons

New Testament
- Phoebe in Romans 16:1-2
  1. How should we translate *diakonos*?
    a. "Servant": Rom 15:8; 1 Cor 3:5; 2 Cor 11:15
    b. "Minister": 2 Cor 3:6; Col 1:7; 4:7; 1 Tim 4:6
    c. "Deacon": Phil 1:1; 1 Tim 3:8, 12
  2. Why didn't Paul just use the work "deacons"?
     - "First, prior to canon nineteen of the Council of Nicea (AD 325), there are no certain examples of the Greek feminine διακόνισσα. In this earlier period, the masculine διάκονος was used for female as well as male deacons" (Blackburn, _EWEC_, 1.303 n. 1).
  3. Notice that Paul specifies the church as the place of her service.
  4. How would you translate *diakonos* if Phoebe (female) were Phoebus (male)?

- "Women" in 1 Timothy 3:11
  1. They could be wives of deacons.
     - Why would there be "qualifications" for the wives of deacons but not for the wives of elders (1 Timothy 3:1-7)?
  2. They could be female deacons.
     - Note that both lists (below) begin with the same character trait ("serious, worthy of respect/honor"). Plus, the next two qualities are similar.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Timothy 3:8 (Men)</th>
<th>1 Timothy 3:11 (Women)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serious</td>
<td>Serious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not double-tongued</td>
<td>No slanderers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not addicted to much wine</td>
<td>Temperate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Apphia in Philemon 2 (?)
  1. She could be Philemon's wife.
     - But, the "you" is singular in verse two: "and to the church that meets in your *(singular)* house." Note the use of "their" in Romans 16:5 and 1 Cor 16:19.
  2. She could be a deacon.
     - Except for churches as a whole, the only groups mentioned in Paul's greetings are "bishops and deacons" (Phil 1:1).
     - Interestingly, she is mentioned *before* Archippus.

- "Deacons" in Philippians 1:1 (?)

Non-Christian Evidence
- Pliny, *Epistle* 10.96.8 (ca. A.D. 112)
  In Asia Minor (modern Turkey), the Roman governor Pliny mentions two women whom the Christians "call deaconesses."
when they had repeated after me a formula of invocation to the gods and had made offerings of wine and incense to your statue (which I had ordered to be brought into court for this purpose along with the images of the gods), and furthermore had reviled the name of Christ: none of which things, I understand, any genuine Christian can be induced to do.

Others, whose names were given to me by an informer, first admitted the charge and then denied it; they said that they had ceased to be Christians two or more years previously, and some of them even twenty years ago. They all did reverence to your statue and the images of the gods in the same way as the others, and reviled the name of Christ. They also declared that the sum total of their guilt or error amounted to no more than this:¹ they had met regularly before dawn on a fixed day to chant verses alternately among themselves in honour of Christ as if to a god, and also to bind themselves by oath, not for any criminal purpose, but to abstain from theft, robbery and adultery, to commit no breach of trust and not to deny a deposit when called upon to restore it. After this ceremony it had been their custom to disperse and reassemble later to take food of an ordinary, harmless kind; but they had in fact given up this practice since my edict, issued on your instructions, which banned all political societies. This made me decide it was all the more necessary to extract the truth by torture from two slave-women, whom they call deaconesses. I found nothing but a degenerate sort of cult carried to extravagant lengths.
2. Female Patrons

- Phoebe in Romans 16:1-2
  - How should we translate the noun prostates?
    1. "Helper"
    2. "Patron-ess"
    3. "Ruler, governor, manager": Note the meaning of the verb proistemi in 1 Thessalonians 5:12; 1 Timothy 3:4, 12; 5:17.
- "Not a few prominent women" of Thessalonica in Acts 17:4 (Likely)
- "A number of prominent Greek women" of Berea in Acts 17:12 (Likely)
- Chloe in 1 Corinthians 1:11 (?)
- Some of the five Female Hosts of House Churches (see below) (?)

3. Female Apostles

- Junia in Romans 16:7
  1. What's the issue? A different accent mark makes the name male or female.
     - Iounían (a masculine form for the name "Junias")
     - Iounian (a feminine form for the name "Junia")
  2. What is the evidence for Junia (female)?
     - The first extant writer to think Junia was male is Aegidius of Rome (AD 1245-1316).
     - There is no record of anyone ever being named Junias "in ancient literature or inscriptions, either Latin or Greek" (Walters, EWEC 1.186).
     - Lampe has recorded over 250 instances of Junia (Walters, EWEC 1.186 n. 57).
  3. What does it mean to call Junia an "apostle"?
     - There is the generic sense of "missionary, delegate, or messenger." See Barnabas (Acts 14:4, 14); Andronicus (Rom 16:7); Titus (2 Cor 8:23); Epaphroditus (Phil 2:25)
     - See also James (Gal 1:19); Apollos (1 Cor 4:6, 9).
  4. What does the phrase "prominent among the apostles" mean? Two Options
     - It means that Andronicus and Junia are [thought to be] outstanding by the apostles.
       a. But the construction in Romans 16:7 (adjective + en + a human group) never indicates agency ("by") in the New Testament (Belleville, Women in Ministry, 42-43).
       b. See Romans 8:29; 1 Corinthians 3:18; 6:5; 11:19; 2 Corinthians 10:1.
     - It means that Andronicus and Junia are notable among the apostles (that is, they are prominent among those people called "apostles").
       a. All the patristic commentators read "among" (Sanday and Headlam, Romans, 423).
       b. Agency ("by") would be expressed differently in Greek (hupo + genitive case).

- The Seventy in Luke 10:1 (?)
  - From the time of Origin (ca. AD 185-254), many commentators assumed that women were included among the 70 whom Jesus sent (Belleville, Women in Ministry, 45 n. 54).

- The Women in Matthew 28:1-8 (?)
  - Can we call these women "the apostles to the apostles" (cf. Mark 16:8; Luke 24:1-11)?
4. Ministry Teams

Husband/Wife Teams
• Priscilla and Aquila
  - Acts 18:2, 18, 26; Romans 16:3; 1 Corinthians 16:19; 2 Timothy 4:19.
  - Note the underlines above, where Priscilla is named first in 4 of the 6 passages.

• Andronicus and Junia in Romans 16:7
  ➢ Note that in the first example, the wife appears to be more prominent; in the second example, the husband appears to be more prominent.

➢ These missionary pairs may echo Jesus’ example of sending out workers “two by two” (Luke 10:1; cf. Luke 19:29; 22:8). Note many other pairings in Acts (i.e., Peter and John; Paul and Barnabas; Judas and Silas; Paul and Silas; and Barnabas and Mark).

Female/Female Pair
• Tryphena and Tryphosa in Romans 16:12: they are “workers in the Lord.”

Seven Other Pairs¹
• Joanna and Chuza (Luke 8:3) (?)
• The Seventy in Luke 10:1 (?)
• Cleopas and his unnamed companion in Luke 24:13-35 (?)
• Apostles and their wives in 1 Corinthians 9:5 (?)
• “Brothers of the Lord” and their wives in 1 Corinthians 9:5 (?)
• Philologus and Julia in Romans 16:15 (?)
• Nereus and his sister in Romans 16:15 (?)

5. Female Hosts of House Churches

• References to house churches² and men who are named as hosts³

• Mary in Acts 12:12 (Jerusalem)
• Lydia in Acts 16:15, 40 (Philippi)
• Prisca (and Aquila) in Romans 16:3-5 (Rome); in 1 Corinthians 16:8, 19 (Ephesus)
• Nympha in Colossians 4:15 (Likely)
• Phoebe in Romans 16:1-2 (?) (Cenchrea)

¹It’s hard to make too much of these six pairs, but it is also a mistake to make too little of them because of Jesus’ example and because of the service of the first two ministry teams.

²For other explicit, likely, or possible references to house churches, see also Acts 1:13-14; 2:46; 5:42; 20:20; Romans 16:14, 15. For the (likely) presence of multiple house churches in a city, see Acts 12:17; Romans 16:4, 14, 15, 23; 1 Thess 5:27.

³See Gaius in Romans 16:23 (Corinth); Philemon in Philemon 1-2; Jason in Acts 17:6 (?) (Thessalonica); Titius Justus in Acts 18:7 (?) (Corinth). Cf. Tavia in Ignatius, To the Smyrneans 13.2 (?).
6. Female Coworkers

- Prisca in Romans 16:3-5
  - As coworkers, Prisca and Aquila “risk their necks” for Paul’s life.

- Euodia and Syntyche in Philippians 4:2-3
  - Paul says, “They struggled side by side with me in the gospel.”
  - See the use of the phrase “in the gospel” in Rom 1:9 and 1 Thess 3:2.

7. Female Laborers

- Mary in Romans 16:6
- Tryphena in Romans 16:12
- Tryphosa in Romans 16:12
- Persis in Romans 16:12

- What does "labor" (kopian, kopos) mean?
  1. Work (in general): 1 Cor 4:12; 2 Thess 3:8
  2. Work of ministry: 1 Cor 3:8; 2 Cor 10:14-15; Gal 4:11; Phil 2:16; 1 Thess 3:5; 5:12; 1 Tim 5:17

- Implications of 1 Corinthians 16:16
  - This passage is the only passage where the word “submit to, be subject to” (hupotassethai) is used of the relationship between the members in the congregation and people who work in the congregation, although the idea is found elsewhere (1 Thess 5:12).

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8. Female Prophets

Old Testament
- Deborah in Judges 4:4
- Huldah in 2 Kings 22:8-20 (see also 2 Chronicles 34:14-28)
- Isaiah's wife in Isaiah 8:3
- Ezekiel 13:17-23 (false prophetesses)
- Note Noadiah in Nehemiah 6:14 (false prophetess).

New Testament
- Anna in Luke 2:36
- Philip's four daughters in Acts 21:9
- Women who "pray and prophesy" in 1 Corinthians 11:5
- Elizabeth in Luke 1:41-45 (?)
- Women in 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 (?)

What does a prophet do?
- Evidence from Acts 15:30-32
- Evidence from 1 Corinthians 14:1-4, 19, 29-32

Early Church History
- Ammia in Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 5.17.1-4; 3.37.1
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Acts 15:30-32</th>
<th>1 Corinthians 14:1-5, 19, 28-33</th>
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<td>Congregation gathered (v. 30)</td>
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<td>Be silent (v. 30)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
of their sayings he continues as follows: "I have given this abstract of what I found in a work of theirs when they were attacking the work of Alcibiades the Christian in which he shows that a prophet need not to speak in ecstasy." And he goes on in the same work to give a catalogue of those who have been prophets of the New Testament, and among them he numbers a certain Ammia and Quadratus and says thus: "But the false prophet speaks in ecstasy, after which follow ease and freedom from fear; he begins with voluntary ignorance, but turns to involuntary madness of soul, as has been said before. But they cannot show that any prophet, either of those in the Old Testament or of those in the New, was inspired in this way; they can boast neither of Agabus, nor of Judas, nor of Silas, nor of the daughters of Philip, nor of Ammia in Philadelphia, nor of Quadratus, nor of any others who do not belong to them." And again after a little he goes on, "For if the Montanist women succeeded to Quadratus and Ammia in Philadelphia in the prophetic gift, let them show who among them succeeded the followers of Montanus and the women, for the apostle grants that the prophetic gift shall be in all the church until the final coming, but this they could not show, seeing that this is already the fourteenth year from the death of Maximilla."

He, therefore, so writes. But the Miltiades mentioned by him has also left us other monuments of his own zeal for the oracles of God in the treatises which to be correct so far as historical fact is concerned, but the evidence of the mss. seems equally to prove that the mistake is due to Eusebius himself, and as such ought to appear in the text. See Introduction, p. lv., and cf. McGiffert's note ad loc.
9. Female Prayer

Old Testament
- Hannah in 1 Samuel 1:9-20; 2:1-10

The Apocrypha and First-Century Jewish Authors
- Sarah in Tobit 3:11-15
- Tobias and Sarah in Tobit 8:4-8
- Judith in Judith 9:2-14; 13:4b-5; 7b
- 2 Maccabees 3:18-22
- Philo, *On the Posterity of Cain* 179; Josephus, *Jewish War* 1.584

New Testament
- Anna in Luke 2:37b
- “The women and Mary the mother of Jesus” in Acts 1:12-14
- Lydia and some women in Acts 16:13-15
- Wives from the church at Tyre in Acts 21:5
- Husbands and wives in 1 Corinthians 7:5
- Women in 1 Corinthians 11:5, 13
- “Real widow” in 1 Timothy 5:5
- Mary in Luke 1:46-55 (?)

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5 In many other passages, Scripture implies that women participate in prayer (e.g., Acts 2:42; 12:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:17, 25; James 5:13, 16). For the passages from Philo, Josephus, and Judith, see M. H. McDowell’s book *Prayers of Jewish Women* (2006).
10. Female Teachers

- Priscilla in Acts 18:26
  - Acts 18:2, 18, 26; Romans 16:3; 1 Corinthians 16:19; 2 Timothy 4:19.
  - Note the underlines above, where Priscilla is named first in four of the six passages.

- Prophets in 1 Corinthians 14:19 ("instruct"), 31 ("learn")

- Teaching and admonishing through singing in Colossians 3:16

- Older women in Titus 2:3-5

- Anna in Luke 2:38 (?)

- Samaritan woman in John 4:29-30, 39, 42 (?)

- “Teaching” in 1 Cor 14:26 (?)

- Euodia and Syntyche in Philippians 4:2-3 (?)

- Lois and Eunice in 2 Tim 1:5 (?)

- “Entrust these things to faithful ones who are able to teach others” in 2 Tim 2:2 (?)

- “Teachers” in James 3:1 (?)
Ten Functions Women Perform in the New Testament: Significance

1. Many women are mentioned in the New Testament.

2. Many and varied activities are connected with these women.

3. Even more women (and men) were active in the NT churches than what Scripture records.

4. For almost everyone who goes back to the NT, there is new evidence on the table (new functions, new women).

5. Translations can and have hidden women’s activity.

6. Advocates for inclusive congregations do so because of what Scripture says.

7. Advocates for inclusive congregations do so because Scripture is authoritative for them.
Exploring 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

• The Context of the Letter
  1. Paul is responding to a letter from the Corinthians (7:1; see also 7:25; 8:1; 12:1; 14:1; 16:1, 12).
  2. Paul may be responding to a specific question from the Corinthians in 11:2-16, even though there is no "now concerning" (peri de); note there is no peri de preceding 11:17-34, which, nevertheless, appears to be part of Paul's response to specific questions (note v. 34b).
    - It is possible that Paul is responding both to information in their letter and to information from the envos from Corinth (16:17).

• The Context of the Passage: Worship in the Congregation
  1. Immediate Context
    • Note the parallel structure in 11:2 "I praise you;" 11:17 "I praise you not."
      In other words, 11:2-17 and 11:17-34 are connected by contrasting phrases.
  2. Structure of the Letter
    • We move from "the relation of Christians to pagan worship" (chapters 8-10) to "the question of Christian worship (chapters 11-14)" (Holladay, 138).
    • Note praying (in tongues) and prophecy are at issue in chapters 12-14 (Black, 194).
  3. Nature of Prophecy
    • Note that "Prophecy by definition, presupposes an audience; it is not a private act" (Holladay, 140; see 1 Corinthians 14:3-4; 29-32).
  4. Reflection on the Situation
    • "It is difficult to imagine why the problem addressed would exist if a private setting were assumed" (Holladay, 140).
  5. Paul's Explicit Statement
    • Note the context of church practice stated in 1 Corinthians 11:16.

• The Structure of the Passage

  Introductory appeal to tradition vv. 2-3 "maintain the traditions" [v. 2]
  A Appeal to culture vv. 4-6 "shames; shameful" [vv. 4, 5, 6]
  B Appeal to creation vv. 7-10 "image of God [v. 7]; "created" [v. 9]
    C Appeal to "new creation" vv. 11-12 "in the Lord" [v. 11]
    A' Appeal to culture v. 13 "proper/suitable/seemly/fitting"
    B' Appeal to creation vv. 14-15 "nature" [v. 14]
  Concluding appeal to tradition v. 16 "such a custom"
• The Question about "Head" (kephalē)
  1. Literal: "Physical head"
  2. Metaphorical
     • "Leader, authority over"
       Ephesians 1:20-23; Colossians 2:10
     • "Source, origin"
       Ephesians 4:15-16; Colossians 2:18-19; 1 Corinthians 11:8, 12
  3. The Interpretation of 1 Cor 11:3
     • "Leader": A hierarchy is set up in the order Christ, man, woman, and God.
     • "Source": A chronological sequence is indicated with the story of creation
       (Christ/man; man/woman) and the incarnation (God/Christ). This interpretation
       goes back at least as far as Cyril of Alexandria (died 444; Fee, 504 n. 48).

• The Message of Creation: 1 Corinthians 11:11-12
  1. “Nevertheless (“true, but”), woman is not independent of man nor is man
     independent of woman in the Lord.”
     • Stated positively, there is mutuality between men and women.
  2. “FOR (explanation) AS (analogy) woman was made from man (11:8b), SO
     man is now born of woman. And all things are from God.”
  3. Message: It is God’s plan that humans could look at creation and see the
     mutuality between male and female.

• Paul, Time, and Gender: 1 Corinthians 10:11; Gal 3:28; 2 Cor 6:18a

• Conclusions and Questions
  1. Paul both argues for maintaining cultural gender distinctions between males and
     females and affirms that Christians are part of a new creation "in the Lord."
     • 1 Corinthians 11:11-12 do not overthrow vv. 3-10; rather, they render the
       situation "more complex" (Hays, 188).
     • Paul affirms both 11:3-10 and 11:11-12, and so should we.
       a. To act as if cultural gender distinctions determine faith and practice is
          to elevate culture over our identity in Christ.
       b. To act as if cultural gender expectations do not exist is "a sign not of
          authentic spirituality but of an adolescent impatience with the world in
          which God has placed us" (Hays, 191).
  2. Whatever order is introduced in 11:3-10 functions to enable the women to
     continue to pray and prophesy, not to restrict the activity of women praying
     and prophesying.
  3. The emphasis is on how the women are to pray and prophesy (viz., with a
     covered head).
  4. If the subordination of females to males is required because of the appeal to
     creation, then why are head coverings on women not required for the same
     reason?
  5. If women who pray and prophesy in worship are doing something wrong, then
     why does Paul even discuss how they are praying and prophesying (i.e.,
     without a head covering)?
  6. If God gifted women to pray and prophesy in the OT and in NT churches, on
     what basis would the same (or similar) actions be wrong today?
What Paul Might Have Read

Paul,

Some of us are shocked about the behavior of women while they are praying and prophesying in our assemblies. The women’s uncovered heads are not proper in public, where a number of men are present. The women claim the authority to pray and prophesy with their heads uncovered because gender distinctions do not matter in the Lord. They base this claim on the tradition said at their baptism, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female." We want to maintain the traditions you delivered to us, but this tradition certainly does not permit women to act in this way, does it? Paul, we need your advice, since the discussions about this custom are becoming contentious.¹

¹The italicized words reflect words from 1 Corinthians 11:2-16. Compare the "letter" by Richard Hays in First Corinthians (Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Preaching and Teaching; Louisville, KY: John Knox, 1997), 182-183.
Outline of the Passage

Following the contours of Paul’s thought in 11:2-16 is notoriously difficult. The following outline, however, shows that Paul, in a recognizable pattern of repeating appeals, argues for women having headcoverings based on tradition, culture, and creation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introductory appeal to tradition</th>
<th>v. 2</th>
<th>&quot;maintain the traditions&quot; (v. 2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Appeal to culture</td>
<td>vv. 3-6</td>
<td>&quot;shames; shameful&quot; (vv. 4, 5, 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Appeal to creation</td>
<td>vv. 7-10</td>
<td>&quot;image of God (v. 7); &quot;created&quot; (v. 9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Appeal to &quot;new creation&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;in the Lord&quot; (v. 11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A' Appeal to culture</td>
<td>v. 13</td>
<td>&quot;proper&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B' Appeal to creation</td>
<td>vv. 14-15</td>
<td>&quot;nature&quot; (v. 14)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concluding appeal to tradition</td>
<td>v. 16</td>
<td>&quot;such a custom&quot;</td>
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Although the argumentation may not match our expectations, it accords surprisingly strongly with other ancient arguments for maintaining gender differences.¹

¹See Epictetus Discourse 1.16.9-14.
then proceed to complain against God on our own account! Yet, by Zeus and the gods, one single gift of nature would suffice to make a man who is reverent and grateful perceive the providence of God. Do not talk to me now of great matters: take the mere fact that milk is produced from grass, and cheese from milk, and that wool grows from skin—who is it that has created or devised these things? “No one,” somebody says. Oh, the depth of man’s stupidity and shamelessness!

Come, let us leave the chief works of nature, and consider merely what she does in passing. Can anything be more useless than the hairs on a chin? Well, what then? Has not nature used even these in the most suitable way possible? Has she not by these means distinguished between the male and the female? Does not the nature of each one among us cry aloud forthwith from afar, “I am a man; on this understanding approach me, on this understanding talk with me; ask for nothing further; behold the signs”? Again, in the case of women, just as nature has mingled in their voice a certain softer note, so likewise she has taken the hair from their chins. Not so, you say; on the contrary the human animal ought to have been left without distinguishing features, and each of us ought to proclaim by word of mouth, “I am a man.” Nay, but how fair and becoming and dignified the sign is! How much more fair than the cock’s comb, how much more magnificent than the lion’s mane! Wherefore, we ought to preserve the signs which God has given; we ought not to throw them away; we ought not, so far as in us lies, to confuse the sexes which have been distinguished in this fashion.
She frequents the baths by night; not till night
does she order her oil-flasks and her quarters to be
shifted thither; she loves all the bustle and sweat of
the bath; when her arms are exhausted by the
heavy weights, the smoker passes his hand skilfully
over her body, bringing it down at last with a re-
sounding smack upon the top of her thigh. Mean-
while her unfortunate guests are overcome with sleep
and hunger, till at last she comes in with a flushed face,
and with thirst enough to drink off the vessel con-
taining full three gallons which is laid at her feet, and
from which she toasts off a couple of pints before her
dinner to create a raging appetite; then she brings it
all up again and soaks the floor with the washings
of her inside. The stream runs over the marble pave-
ment; the gilt basin reeks of Falernian, for she drinks
and vomits like a big snake that has tumbled into a
vat. The sickened husband closes his eyes and so
keeps down his bile.

But most intolerable of all is the woman who
as soon as she has sat down to dinner commands
Virgil, pards the dying Dido, and pits the poets
against each other, putting Virgil in the one scale
and Homer in the other. The grammarians make
way before her; the rhetoricians give in; the whole
crowd is silenced: no lawyer, no auctioneer will get
a word in, no, nor any other woman; so torrential
is her speech that you would think that all the pots
and bells were being clasped together. Let no
one more blow a trumpet or clap a cymbal: one
woman will be able to bring succour to the labouring
moon. She lays down definitions, and discourses
on morals, like a philosopher; thirsting to be deemed
both wise and eloquent, she ought to tuck up her
skirts knee-high, sacrifice a pig to Silvanus, and
take a pennyc bath. Let not the wife of your bosom
possess a special style of her own; let her not hurl
at you in whirling speech the crooked enthymeme!
Let her not know all history; let there be some
things in her reading which she does not under-
stand. I hate a woman who is for ever consulting
and poring over the "Grammar" of Palaemon,
who observes all the rules and laws of language, who
like an antiquary quotes verses that I never heard of,
and corrects her unlettered female friends for slips of
speech that no man need trouble about. She then
husbands at least be permitted to make slips in grammar!

There is nothing that a woman will not permit
herself to do, nothing that she deems shameful, when
she adorns her neck with green emeralds, and
fastens huge pearls to her elongated ears: there is no-
thing more intolerable than a wealthy woman. Mean-
while she ridiculously puff out and disfigures her face
with lumps of dough; she reaps rich Poppaea,
ungenius which stick to the lips of her unfortunate
husband. Her lover she will meet with a clean-
wasnked skin; but when does she ever care to look
nice at home? It is for her lovers that she provides
the epicurean, for them she buys all the scents which
the slender Indians bring to us. In good time she
disposes her face; she removes the first layer of
plaster, and begins to be recognizably herself.
She then devours herself with that milk for which she takes a herd
of she-asses in her train if sent away to the Hyper-
Focus of the Passage: Women

Who is Paul really interested in: only the men, only the women, both the men and women? A striking feature of this passage is the consistency with which Paul's language about men parallels his language about women. Eight times when men are treated, women are also treated. The stress, however, falls on the women. That is, between the introductory and concluding appeal to tradition (11:2, 16), every excursus (4x), except one (11:12b), treats the women more fully, as the following diagram shows:

1. "The head of every man is Christ."
   "The head of woman is man." (11:3)
2. "Every man praying or prophesying with his head ... shames his head."
   "Every woman praying or prophesying with her head ... shames her head." (11:4-5)

Excursus A
   "For if a woman ..."
   "Now if it is shameful for a woman ..." (11:6)
3. "For a man, on the one hand ..."
   "A woman, on the other hand ..." (11:7)
4. "For man is not from woman,"
   "but woman is from man." (11:8)
5. "For man was not created from woman,"
   "but woman was created on account of man." (11:9)

Excursus B
   "On account of this, a woman ought to have authority over her head because of the angels." (11:10)
6. "Nevertheless, neither is woman anything without man,"
   "nor is man anything without woman in the Lord." (11:11)
7. "For as woman is from man,"
   "so man is through woman." (11:12a)

Excursus C
   "But all things are from God." (11:12b)

Excursus D
   "Judge for yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God uncovered?"
8. "Does not nature teach you that"
   "if a man wears long hair, it is dishonor for him,"
   "but if a woman wears long hair, it is glory for her?" (11:14-15a)

Excursus E
   "Because [her] hair is given [to her] for a covering." (11:15b)

The extensive comparisons and contrasts between men and women suggest that gender distinctions are at issue. The emphasis on the women, seen in the excurses, points to actions on the part of women, where these distinctions are not being upheld, thus bringing shame to the church.

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1 The contrast is between men and women, not husbands and wives, the latter pair creating non sequiturs when read in 1 Cor 11:3, 4, 9-10.

2 According to Black, there are "103 words to discuss the women and only 39 regarding the men" ("1 Corinthians 11:1-16," 1.195).
The Problem of Uncovered Prophets: Exploring 1 Cor 11:2-16
KEN CUKROWSKI

Headcoverings, prophets, the cryptic phrase “because of the angels”—what is going on in 1 Cor 11:2–16? Certainly one of the more difficult passages in the New Testament, 1 Cor 11:2–16 presents an array of vexing problems, each one impacting the interpretation of the passage. Despite my desire to address all difficulties in the text, engage the academic literature, and discuss the application of the text, I will restrict myself to the task of a clear explanation of an apparently murky passage. We begin with the context of the passage, and then move to some of the key issues.*

CONTEXT OF 1 CORINTHIANS
How does 1 Cor 11:2–16 fit within the letter as a whole? First Corinthians is not Paul’s first contact with the Corinthians. Paul founds the church at Corinth on his first visit to the city (Acts 18:1–8) with the assistance of Silas and Timothy (Acts 18:5; 2 Cor 1:19). After a stay of eighteen months in Corinth (Acts 18:11), Paul moves and spends the next three years in Ephesus (Acts 19:1–20:1, 31). During his time in Ephesus, Paul writes a letter, now lost, to Corinth (1 Cor 5:9).

Apparently, Paul hears quite a bit about the church in Corinth. He hears from Chloe’s people about quarreling in Corinth (1 Cor 1:11); Paul mentions other reports about Corinth throughout his letter (1 Cor 5:1; 11:18; 15:12); and the three envoys carrying the letter, Stephanus, Achaicus, and Fortunatus (1 Cor 16:17–18), likely converse with Paul about the contents of the letter.

First Corinthians is a response to the letter from the Corinthians carried by those three emissaries; Paul responds to their questions as 1 Cor 7:1 indicates: “Now concerning (peri de) the things about which you wrote.” The same phrase (peri de) occurs several more times in 1 Corinthians, probably indicating matters that the Corinthians have raised to Paul in their letter.2

Was the matter about headcoverings a topic mentioned in the letter from the Corinthians? It seems possible, even though “now concerning” (peri de) does not begin the passage. It is worth noting that no peri de precedes 11:17–34, which, nevertheless, appears to be part of Paul’s response to specific questions about the Lord’s Supper (note v. 34b). At the same time, it is also possible that Paul is responding to information from the other sources (1:11; 5:1; 11:18) or the three envoys sent from Corinth (16:17).

WHAT PAUL MIGHT HAVE READ
We don’t actually know what Paul might have read. So, in what follows we engage in a significant degree of conjecture; let the reader beware. However, the attempt is not without merit. In fact, envisioning the circumstances that produced Paul’s response is a key, perhaps lost, to understanding this passage. The danger is mirror reading, assuming that every statement of Paul’s is a response to or denial of what the Corinthians wrote. The challenge for any interpreter is to account for Paul’s praise in 11:2 and his critique in the following verses. In other words, the Corinthians were doing something right, but not completely right.
Taking into account key words from 1 Cor 11, I attempted to craft a fictitious letter approximating what Paul might have read:

Paul,

Some of us are shocked about the behavior of women while they are praying and prophesying in our assemblies. The women's uncovered heads are not proper in public, where a number of men are present. The women claim the authority to pray and prophesy with their heads uncovered because gender distinctions do not matter in the Lord. They base this claim on the traditional recitation at their baptism, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female." We want to maintain the traditions you delivered to us, but this tradition certainly does not permit women to act in this way, does it?

Paul, we need your advice, since the discussions about this custom are becoming contentious.3

CONTEXT OF THE PASSAGE: WORSHIP IN THE CONGREGATION

Why are headcoverings such an issue? Since the church meets in a house—the domain where women have greatest freedom—it seems possible that the women think of the church meeting as a "private" context. Others in Corinth likely view the assembly as a "public" place, since outsiders or unbelievers freely enter (14:23). As support for the public/private distinction, note the contrast between "at home" and "in church" in 14:35.4

Despite the differing views of the nature of the gathering, the purpose of the gathering is clear: the church is gathered together for worship. First, the structure of the letter points in this direction. As Carl Holladay notes, in 1 Cor 11 one moves from "the relation of Christians to pagan worship" (chapters 8–10) to "the question of Christian worship"5 (chapters 11–14). The worship issues in chapters 12–14—praying (in tongues at 14:15) and prophesying—are the same issues here (1 Cor 11:4–5, 13).6 Second, the contrasting phrases in the immediate context point to a parallel structure (i.e., 11:2 "I praise you," 11:17 "I praise [you] not"), connecting 11:2–16 with the discussion of the Lord's Supper in 11:17–34, which is clearly in the context of worship. Third, prophecy "by definition, presupposes an audience; it is not a private act."7 Fourth, reflection on the situation virtually demands a public setting, since it "is difficult to imagine why the problem addressed would exist if a private setting were assumed."8 Fifth, and most persuasive, Paul explicitly places his discussion in the context of church practice in 1 Cor 11:16.

OUTLINE OF THE PASSAGE

Following the contours of Paul's thought in 11:2–16 is notoriously difficult. The following outline, however, shows that Paul, in a recognizable pattern of repeating appeals, argues for women having headcoverings based on tradition, culture, and creation:

| Introductory appeal to tradition | v. 2 | "maintain the traditions" (v. 2) |
| Appeal to culture | v. 3–6 | "shames; shameful" (vv. 4, 5, 6) |
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| Appeal to culture | v. 13 | "proper" |
| Appeal to creation | v. 14–15 | "nature" (v. 14) |
| Concluding appeal to tradition | v. 16 | "such a custom" |

Although the argumentation may not match our expectations, it accords surprisingly strongly with other ancient arguments for maintaining gender differences.9
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Who is Paul really interested in: only the men, only the women, both the men and women? A striking feature of this passage is the consistency with which Paul's language about men parallels his language about women. Eight times when men are treated, women are also treated. The stress, however, falls on the women. That is, between the introductory and concluding appeal to tradition (11:2, 16), every excursus (4x), except one (11:12b), treats the women more fully, as the following diagram shows:

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Excursus A

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Excursus B

"On account of this, a woman ought to have authority over her head because of the angels."
(11:10)
6. "Nevertheless, neither is man anything without woman, 
   "nor" woman anything without man, "for the angels."
7. "For as a woman is from man,
   "so" man is through woman." (11:11–12a)

Excursus C

"But all things are from God." (11:12b)

Excursus D

"Judge for yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God uncovered?"
(11:13)
8. "Does not nature teach you that
   "if" a man wears long hair, it is a dishonor for him,
   "but if" a woman wears long hair, it is a glory for her?" (11:14–15a)

Excursus E

"Because [her] hair is given [to her] for a covering."
(11:15b)

The extensive comparisons and contrasts between men and women suggest that gender distinctions are at issue. The emphasis on the women, seen in the excurses, points to actions on the part of women in which these distinctions are not being upheld, thus bringing shame to the church.

Female Prophets

The congregation in which I was reared did not mention female prophets. Since others may share a similar history, a word about female prophets and prophecy may be in order. Found both in the Old Testament and New Testament, female prophets play a role, often significant, in the life of God's people. From Miriam (Exodus 15:20) to Deborah (Judges 4:4), from Philip's four daughters (Acts 21:9) to the female prophets at Corinth (1 Cor 11:5), mention of their activity dots both testaments.
What Does a Prophet Do?

If we were to walk into the assembly at Corinth where prophets were prophesying, what would we see? Based on the evidence from Acts 15:30–32 and 1 Cor 14:1–4, 19, 28–32, several characteristics are clear. We can say something about the context of prophecy, the actions, the length of the speaking, a means of prophecy, and the control of prophets, as the following chart illustrates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acts 15:30–32</th>
<th>1 Cor 14:1–5, 19, 28–33</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Context</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actions</strong></td>
<td><strong>1 Cor 14:1–5, 19, 28–33</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregation gathered</td>
<td>The church (v. 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhort</td>
<td>Up-building (v. 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthen</td>
<td>Exhortation (v. 3, 31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Depth</strong></td>
<td>v. 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Length</strong></td>
<td><strong>v. 32</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many words</td>
<td>Revelation (v. 30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Means</strong></td>
<td>Be silent (v. 30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control</strong></td>
<td>v. 31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In other words, a prophet is someone who speaks for an extended period of time in the context of the gathered body of believers, proclaiming words that exhort, strengthen, comfort, edify, and teach. This description sounds much like what most would now call preaching. Two points of clarification are needed. First, prophecy and preaching do overlap to a high degree, more than many have realized. Second, prophecy and preaching are not entirely identical, despite the overlap, since we also have to reckon with the unexplained aspect of "revelation" (1 Cor 14:30) and the predictive element with one New Testament prophet.13

Headcovering, Not Hairstyle

Some interpreters have seen the issue as one of hairstyle, but several factors militate against this interpretation. First, the expression in 11:4—"[while] having [a covering hanging] down from [his] head"—is not found connected with a hairstyle, but often with a garment.14 Second, the language of 11:5 has the clear sense of "uncovered" in ancient sources.15 Third, there is no evidence that the wording of 11:6 ("cover") ever has the sense of "binding, wrapping." Fourth, those who would translate *peribolasion* ("garment") as "wrapper" go against the clear OT evidence, where the verb is connected with a headcovering (Gen 24:65) and the noun is paralleled with a garment (Psalm 101:27, LXX). In short, the language does not support the hairstyle interpretation in four key verses of 1 Cor 11.

Because of the Angels

The phrase "because of the angels" has prompted numerous proposals but little consensus. In my opinion, the most convincing argument is that angels are thought of as watching over the activities of humans, including worship. A number of texts from diverse sources point to this idea, as the following quotations illustrate. From the Septuagint and the Apocrypha, one finds:

I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart, because you heard the words of my mouth, and I will sing to you before the angels (Psalm 137:1 [LXX]; cf. Psalm 138:1 Hebrew "gods").

I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels who present the prayers of the saints and enter into the presence of the glory of the Holy One (Tobit 12:15).
From the Dead Sea Scrolls, one finds the following description:

No madman, or lunatic, or simpleton, or fool, no blind man, or maimed, or lame, or deaf man, and no minor, shall enter into the Community, for the Angels of Holiness are with them...  

In the Greco-Roman realm, one finds this same idea in Jewish, as well as pagan authors:

In the midst of men and angels, Moses sang his hymns with every kind of harmony and concord, in order that both humans and ministering angels might give heed; that humans might learn thankfulness similar to his own; that angels, as overseers watching, might listen in accordance with their own musical expertise, lest there be any dissonance in his song. (Philo, On the Virtues, 74)

Plutarch also depicts “daemons,” whom Philo equates with angels, as “posted on earth as guardians and overseers of the deeds of humans.” Elsewhere Plutarch envisions these daemons as “overseers of the holy rites of the gods” and as a “ministering class, midway between gods and men, in that they convey thither the prayers and petitions of men, and thence they bring hither the oracles and the gifts of good things.”

What can we conclude from these passages? Those across the religious and ethnic spectrum, from sectarian Jew to Greco-Roman pagan, would understand Paul’s comment about the angels. Thus the Corinthians would understand 11:10 to be saying, “For this reason (that is, woman reflects the glory of man, not God) a woman ought to exercise control over her head [and cover it while praying and prophesying] because of the angels [who watch over worship and report shameful behavior to God].”

THE RESULTING INTERPRETATION

Appeal to Tradition (11:2)

What picture emerges when all of these pieces are brought together? Paul begins by praising the Corinthians for remembering him and maintaining the traditions, likely referring to something similar to Gal 3:28. This tradition had been used to justify the practice of women praying and prophesying with their heads uncovered (11:2). The women likely argued that gender distinctions do not exist in Christ. Since Paul disagrees with how the women are praying and prophesying, he makes a series of appeals for headcoverings on the women in an attempt to restore gender distinctions.

Appeal to Culture (11:3–6)

Next, Paul appeals to culture (11:3–6). He argues for gender distinctions, the key word being “head,” which is used seven times in 11:3–5. The concentration of uses of the word “head” in 1 Cor 11:2–16 (9x) probably indicates that Paul is picking up this term from the language of the Corinthians. Although not Paul’s point, here the implied relationship between male and female appears hierarchical.

Although not Paul’s point, here the implied relationship between male and female appears hierarchical.

The language of “shame” controls the ensuing discussion, occurring three times in 11:4–6. In an entirely balanced way, Paul points out that both men and women can incur shame while they are praying and prophesying because of a headcovering. In other words, the call for headcoverings on the women does not unfairly target only women; men too will be critiqued if they do not pray and prophesy with their heads attired in a proper way. Paul concludes his argument from culture and shame with an extrapolation. To paraphrase Paul in 11:5b–6, “If a woman wants to
act like a man (i.e., pray and prophesy with her head uncovered), then she might as well look like one and shave her head.” Paul hopes that each woman will recognize that eliminating gender distinctions (i.e., shaving off her hair) brings shame. And if she concludes that her behavior brings shame, then she will “cover herself” (11:6).

**Appeal to Creation (11:7-10)**

Based on 11:4–6, two natural questions arise: Why is it that men should not be covered? Why is it that women should be covered? To answer these questions, Paul appeals to creation in 11:7–10, the key word being “glory” (2x in 11:7). In response to the first question, Paul states that man is the glory of God (11:7a), the implication being that since man reflects this glory, he should not be covered because he would be covering God’s glory. Paul then answers the second question. He states that woman is the glory of man (11:7b), the implication being that since woman reflects man’s glory, she should be covered while praying and prophesying because only God’s glory should be reflected during worship.

At this point, one can imagine a Corinthian woman asking, “How is it that woman is the glory of man?” Paul anticipates this question and responds in two ways. First, he points out that “woman is from man,” implying that one reflects the glory of one’s source (11:8). Second, turning now to the purpose of creation, Paul points out that “woman was created on account of man” (11:9).

Paul appeals yet again to creation in 11:10 (“on account of this”). Paul presumes that angels watch over creation. Thus he counsels the women to exercise control over their heads by covering them while they pray and prophesy, lest angels see and report this shameful behavior to God.

**Appeal to "New Creation" (11:11-12)**

Paul’s argument takes a turn at 11:11 (“nevertheless”). Lest anyone conclude that he disagrees with the rationale for the actual practice of women praying and prophesying, Paul appeals to the “new creation,” where “neither is woman anything without man, nor is man anything without woman in the Lord.” Two features are noteworthy in 11:11. Paul changes the order; “woman” is mentioned first. Also, Paul emphasizes the “new creation” in Christ by breaking the parallelism of the verse with the addition of the phrase “in the Lord.”

In yet another appeal to creation, Paul explains (γαρ, “for”) the interdependence of woman and man with an analogy in 11:12: “For as woman is from man (echoing 11:8), so man is through woman (i.e., birth)” This interdependence is God’s plan, since “all things are from God” (11:12b), a phrase emphasized by Paul’s break in the parallelism.

**Appeal to Culture (11:13)**

Paul’s second appeal to culture comes in 11:13 (“proper”). Focusing on the woman, Paul returns to his primary task of restoring gender distinctions. Picking up “pray” and “uncovered” from 11:5, he asks rhetorically, “Is it proper for a woman to pray to God uncovered?” Of course, he is prompting a response of “no.”

**Appeal to Creation (11:14-15)**

Paul appeals to creation for a third time (11:14–15), here described as “nature.” Using the example of “long hair” (3x), Paul argues that nature teaches both men and women that how one’s head is covered can
bring “dishonor” or “glory” (echoing 11:7). Paul’s point is clear; just as nature teaches women that “long hair is given for a covering,” so a woman should grasp that headcoverings are given to women for a covering while praying and prophesying.

**Appeal to Tradition (11:16)**

Paul concludes in the same way he began in 11:2: with an appeal to tradition. In 11:16 Paul calls on those who might be “contentious” to consider that “neither we nor the churches of God have such a custom,” namely women praying and prophesying uncovered.

**CONCLUSION**

What have we seen, and what should we conclude? First, Paul’s call for the women to cover their heads functions in two ways: (1) to preserve gender distinctions by calling for the women to cover their heads; and (2) to enable the women to continue to pray and prophesy, not to restrict women from praying and prophesying. Second, Paul addresses how the women are to pray and prophesy (viz., with a covered head), not that they are praying and prophesying. In fact, it would not make much sense for Paul to address the how, if he thought those actions in themselves were wrong. Third, there are tensions inherent in the argument. Creation is used both in a hierarchical context (11:7–10) and in an egalitarian context (11:11–12). Paul’s argument implies both an ontological hierarchy (11:3) and an ontological interdependence (11:11–12).

What is going on here?

For the interpreter, the temptations are two-fold: either to have the hierarchical verses trump the interdependent verses or to have the interdependent verses trump the hierarchical verses. But Paul does neither, and neither should we. To collapse either side is to commit one of two errors. First, to act as if gender distinctions do not exist is “a sign not of authentic spirituality but of an adolescent impatience with the world in which God has placed us.” Second, to act as if the creation order of 11:7–10 determines faith and practice is to ignore the “in the Lord” (11:11) existence of God’s people. In other words, it would be acting as if Christ came, but nothing changed. Furthermore, it is worth noting that creation is used in both a hierarchical (11:7–10) and interdependent context (11:12); that is, those who stress the argument from creation in 11:7–10 usually ignore the appeal to creation in 11:12, not to mention the implications for headcoverings.

Why does Paul preserve that tension? It seems to reflect the tension in his own eschatological framework, where Christians live an “as if not” life (1 Cor 7:29–31). For Paul, Christians are those “upon whom the ends of the ages have come” (1 Cor 10:11). In other words, we Christians live on the “hinge” between the present age and the age to come; we are in a sense amphibious. We are male and female because we live in the present age, but we are also members of a community shaped by Christ’s sacrifice, rendering gender a matter of indifference (Gal 3:28).

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**NOTES**

1. All translations are my own, unless otherwise noted.
2. The italicized words reflect words from 1 Cor 11:2–16. Including even more of the wording might result in the addition of the following: Furthermore, they support their actions by saying, “If the head of man is Christ, and the head of woman is Christ, then neither is the head of the other. To call anyone “head” is shameful for those in the Lord. The spiritual realm does not have distinctions based on gender. After all, angels do not marry. Since both men and women are created in the image of God, both are the glory of God. To cover our heads is to cover the glory of God.” Compare the “leader” by Richard Hays in First Corinthians (Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Preaching and Teaching; Louisville, Ky.: John Knox, 1997), 182–183.
3. For primary sources, see Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*, 7.29–36; Livy, *History of Rome*, 34.2.9–14; Valerius Maximus,
Memorable Deeds and Sayings, 6.3.10–11; 8.3.1–3; Juvenal, Satire, 6.398–401; Plutarch, Lycurgus and Numa, 3.5–6.


6 Holladay, The First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians, 140. See also 1 Cor 14:2–4, 26, 29–33.

7 Holladay, The First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians, 140.

8 See Epictetus, Discourse, 1.16.9–14.

9 The contrast is between men and women, not husbands and wives, the latter pair creating non sequiturs when read in 1 Cor 11:3, 4, 9–10.

10 According to Black, there are "103 words to discuss the women and only 39 regarding the men" ("1 Corinthians 11:1–16," 1.195).

11 For other female prophets, see also Huldah (2 Kings 22:8–20; 2 Chron 34:14–28); Isaiah's wife (Isaiah 8:3); Anna (Luke 2:36); daughters and maidservants (Acts 2:17–18 quoting Joel 2:28–29). Other possibilities include Elizabeth (Luke 1:41–45 comparing 1:67) and the women admonished in 1 Cor 14:34–35. Beyond the NT period, see the description of Ammia (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, 5.17.1–4). Note also the false female prophets Noadiah (Neh 6:14) and Jezebel (Rev 2:20–25).


13 See kata kephales echon in Plutarch, Sayings of Romans, 200EF and kata kephales in Plutarch, The Roman Questions, 267BC; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Roman Antiquities, 12.16.4, 15.9.1–2; Esther 6:12 (LXX [implied]). Thanks go to my research assistant Robert Merchant for collecting these sources.

14 See akatakaluptos in Philo, Special Laws, 3.52–53, esp. 56, 60; Lucian, Essays in Portraiture, 1.


16 See Philo, On Dreams, 1.141; Plutarch, On Fate, 573A.

17 Obsolescence of Oracles, 417A; Isis and Osiris, 361C in Frank Cole Babbitt, trans., Plutarch's Moralia, 16 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1927–67), 5.65. For further descriptions of these daemons, see also Hesiod, Works and Days, 123, 253; Plato, Symposium, 202E–203A; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Roman Antiquities, 1.77; Plutarch, Obsolescence of Oracles, 415AB, 416C–F (cited by Babbitt, 5.64–65); Plutarch, The E at Delphi, 390EF (cited by Babbitt, 5.379).

18 For women looking or acting like men, see Deut 22:5 and Juvenal, Satire, 6.444–447.


20 Hays, First Corinthians, 191.
Unraveling 1 Timothy 2:8-15

• The Context of 1 Timothy
  1. False Teaching: The church is under attack.
     - Words pertaining to teaching (viz., “able to teach,” “teaching,” “teacher,” “teach,” “teach otherwise”) occur 17 times in 1 Timothy (1:3, 7, 10; 2:7, 12; 3:2; 4:1, 6, 11, 13, 16; 5:17; 6:1, 2, 3 [2x]).
     - See especially 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 4:1-4, 7; 6:3-5, 20-21.
  2. Women in 1 & 2 Timothy: The home is under attack.
     - Note the amount of discussion given in 1 Timothy 5:3-16.
       • “Real widows” in 5:3, 5, 16
       • “Younger widows” in 5:6-7, 11-15
     - “Weak women” in 2 Timothy 3:6-7
     - Note also the emphasis on the home and the relationship to society in the description of elders and deacons (1 Timothy 3:2, 4-5, 7, 12).

• The Context of the Passage
  1. Inconsistencies in Translation
     - The Greek text reads “humanity” in 1 Timothy 2:1, 4, 5 and “man [male]” in 1 Tim 2:8. Compare the diverse translations.
     - Some translations read “peaceable, quiet [adj.]” in 1 Timothy 2:2 (referring to all Christians), but “silent [noun]” in 1 Tim 2:11, 12 (referring to women).
  2. Paul is concerned about the behavior of the church (1 Timothy 2:1-3:15, esp. 3:15).

• Structural Features of the Passage: An Emphasis on Modesty
  1. Inclusio (bracket) in 2:9, 15 (“with modesty,” meta sōphrosunēs)
  2. Inclusio (bracket) in 2:11, 12 (“with quiet behavior,” en hēsuchia)

• Keys Terms in the Passage: An Emphasis on Modesty
  1. In 2:9, note the piling up of words connected to modesty:
     I desire that the women adorn (kosmein) themselves in modest (kosmios) attire with modesty (aidōs) and moderation (sōphrosunē).
  2. Paul also shows attention to the idea of modesty in his use of prepein (“be fitting, be seemly/suitable”) in 2:10.
  3. Note the importance of sōphrosunē as follows:
     “The term means ‘temperance’ but also connotes chastity and self-restraint. It was the pre-eminent virtue of Greek women; it is mentioned more frequently than any other quality on women’s tombstones.”

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The Interpretation of the Text

Verse 8
- Notice the following passages from 1 Timothy, in which we see some probable causes and evidence for the men’s quarreling in 2:8:
  - They pay attention to myths and endless genealogies that promote useless speculations (1:4).
  - Some, while going astray, turn away to fruitless discussion (1:6).
  - Avoid godless and silly myths (4:7).
  - He is sick with a morbid craving for debates and disputes about words, from which come envy, strife, slanders, evil suspicions, wranglings of people who have corrupt minds and lack the truth, thinking that godliness is a means of gain (6:4-5).
  - Avoid the godless, empty chatter and the contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge (6:20).

Verses 9-15
- Why does Paul devote these seven verses to women?
  - It seems that there is a specific problem with the women in Ephesus.
  - See Links Between the Women in 1 Timothy 2:9-15 And the “Younger Widows” in 1 Timothy 5 below.

Verses 11-12
- Why does Paul single out women and teaching?
  1. It seems likely that they are involved in the false teaching in some way.
  2. See 1 Timothy 5:13; 2 Timothy 3:6-7.

- What is the best translation for authentein?
  1. On the translation of authentein as “bossy,” note the definition in BDAG: “to assume a stance of independent authority, give orders to, dictate to ... (practically = ‘tell a man what to do’ [Jerusalem Bible].”
  2. Note how “to teach and to be bossy over men” is in contrast to the phrase “but she is to be in quietness.”

Verses 13-14
- How is the OT being used?
  1. A proof text: Genesis 15:6 in Romans 4:3
  2. An example/illustration/analogy: 1 Cor 10:1-11; 2 Corinthians 11:1-4
    - “Watch out for the ‘Eves’ who are being deceived by the false teachers.”

Verse 15
- See the instruction to the “younger widows” in 1 Timothy 5:14.
- “Bearing children” is shorthand for a “well-run family” (Geer, EWEC 1.298).
- On “salvation,” compare the advice to Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:16.
Links Between the Women in 1 Timothy 2:9-15
And the “Younger Widows” in 1 Timothy 5

Question: If Paul is not speaking about women in general, but rather to a particular problem with immodest women in Ephesus, then what evidence is there to connect the women in 2:9-15 with a specific problem in 1 Timothy? Notice the following links between the women of 1 Timothy 2:9-15 and the young widows described in 1 Timothy 5:3-16.

1. Immodest expenditures
In 1 Timothy 2:9, Paul cautions women not “to adorn themselves with braid or gold or pearls or very expensive clothing.” Correspondingly, Paul describes the young widows in 1 Timothy 5:6 with the verb σπατάλαν, which means “to indulge oneself beyond the bounds of propriety, live luxuriously/voluptuously” (BDAG). Thus, 1 Timothy 2:9 contains specific examples of what it means to “live luxuriously” (1 Tim 5:6).

2. Good deeds
In 1 Timothy 2:10, Paul remarks that a proper woman adorns herself “with good deeds.” In his contrast between the younger widows and the real widows in 1 Timothy 5, Paul affirms that a “real widow” (5:3) should be “attested for her good deeds and devoted to every good deed” (5:10). With this item, we have a strong, verbal parallel between the two passages.

3. Quiet behavior
If Paul is concerned with how the women are behaving and speaking in 2:11-12, is there any evidence of unacceptable behavior among the younger widows in 1 Timothy 5? In the language of 1 Timothy 2, do the younger widows exhibit a lack of “quiet behavior” (ἡσυχία)?

Paul has at least three descriptions of behavior that is not quiet behavior. The younger widows are described as “busybodies” who “run about from house to house” (5:13). Apparently their behavior has been so scandalous that it has provided others an opportunity to “revile” the church (5:14). Paul issues a command to avoid luxurious living in order that younger widows may be “without reproach” (5:7). Each of these three descriptions is connected to the absence of “quiet behavior” in other New Testament texts. As evidence, Paul contrasts ἡσυχία with “busybodies” in 2 Thess 3:11-12 (cf. how the verb ἡσυχαζεῖν (“live quietly”) is parallel to “to mind your own business” in 1 Thess 4:11). Also, those who “live quietly” earn the “respect” (not “reproach”) of outsiders (1 Thess 4:11-12).

4. Problems with teaching
When Paul writes, “I do not permit a woman to teach” (2:12), is there any evidence that false teaching is a problem among women in Ephesus? Or, is Paul talking about women teaching in general? From our earlier investigation of the “angry men,” we know that there is ample evidence that the church is under attack from false teaching. Seventeen times Paul uses words associated with teaching (1 Timothy 1:3, 7, 10; 2:7, 12; 3:2; 4:1, 6, 11, 13, 16; 5:17; 6:1, 2, 3 [2x]). But what about the younger widows? Is there any false teaching connected with them? In 5:13, Paul describes the younger widows as “saying what they should not,” a phrase that is associated with false teaching in Titus 1:11 (namely, “teaching what they should not”). It also appears that false teachers are using the homes of women as outposts for the false teaching (2 Timothy 3:6-7).
5. Deception
Twice Paul uses the language of deception in his illustration treating Adam and Eve—"Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor" (2:14). What evidence is there that the younger widows have been deceived? Paul uses neither the verb "deceive" nor the noun "deception" in 1 Timothy 5. However, it seems highly likely that the younger widows, who "have followed after Satan" (5:15), can be described as "deceived."

6. Bearing children
Finally, what is one to do with the cryptic phrase "she will be saved through the bearing of children" (teknoigonia) in 2:15? Interestingly, the verb (teknoigonein) appears in 1 Timothy 5 when the younger widows are admonished "to marry, bear children (teknoigonein), and manage their households" (5:14). In other words, it is highly unlikely that Paul, in 2:15, is saying that a woman must bear a child to be saved. Rather, the word "bearing of children" (teknoigonia) is a compressed way of saying, "Pay attention to your domestic responsibilities." This interpretation of 2:15 not only fits well with the admonition to the younger widows, but also with other passages in 1 Timothy (e.g., those people who "forbid marriage" in 4:3).

Elsewhere in 1 Timothy, Paul also shows care for the state of the home, likely indicating that there are problems in that area. For example, in his instructions regarding elders and deacons, Paul highlights the importance of a strong home. In effect, he also tells potential elders and deacons, "Pay attention to your domestic responsibilities" (3:2, 4-5, 7, 12). Thus, in a context where the home is under attack, and possibly being used as an outpost for false teaching (cf. 2 Tim 3:6-7), such instructions from Paul are not surprising.

\[^2\] "Bearing children" is shorthand for a "well-run family" (Geer, *EWEC* 1.298).
1. A Rule for All Time
+ Paul's instructions do not allow women "to teach or have authority over men" (RSV; 2:12).
+ There is an appeal to creation in 1 Tim 2:13-14.
+ They argue for a hierarchical relationship between men and women, primarily based on the phrase "Adam was created first" (2:13).
+ They argue that 1 Cor 14:34-35 fits with this interpretation
  - It is difficult to consistently apply 1 Timothy 2:8, 9, 12, 15 as rules for all time.
  - If men should occupy positions of authority based on creation, then there are difficulties with modern application. Today women fill virtually every position of leadership in our culture.
    - Supreme Court Justice
    - Senator
    - Mayor
    - Doctor
    - Lawyer
    - Judge
    - Professor
    - Umpire
    - School principal
    - Manager
    - Counselor
    - Teacher
    - Voter
    - Engineer
    - Architect
  - 1 Timothy 2:8 seems to apply to a specific problem with men in Ephesus.
  - There are other places in the OT and NT where women teach or lead.
  - Does the appeal to creation mean that all women are by nature more gullible than men?

2. Specific Instructions for a Specific Problem
+ Since 1 Timothy 2:8 seems to respond to a particular problem with men in Ephesus, it seems likely that 2:9-15 respond to specific problems with women in Ephesus.
+ One can easily apply 1 Timothy 2:8, 9, 12, 15 on the level of principles. For instance, with 2:12 one might say the following:
  If we had problems with immodest, bossy women teaching false doctrine, then we would tell those women not "to teach or be bossy" (2:12); but we don't have that problem. The principle is 'Stop immodest and bossy behavior, as well as false teaching.' Such behavior today should evoke a similar response. In fact, Jesus condemns any disciple—male or female—who behaves in an overbearing way (Luke 22:24-26).
+ There seem to be connections between the women in 1 Timothy 2 and the younger widows in 1 Timothy 5.
+ The appeal to creation in 2:13-14 functions as an illustration.
+ There are no problems with biblical passages showing women teaching or leading.
? If the situation with the younger widows changed, would the instructions in 1 Timothy 2:8-15 also change?
- Opponents argue that 1 Cor 14:34-35 does not fit with this interpretation.
- There is an appeal to pre-Fall creation in 1 Tim 2:13-14.

3. Diversity in the New Testament on this Issue
+ Not all the NT passages affirm or restrict the roles of women.
+ The NT is diverse on some issues (e.g., the attitude of Christians to government, metaphors for salvation, attitude toward slavery, etc.).
+ Perhaps the church was still in the process of working out this issue.
+ Diversity is a reality today with a number of practices in our churches.
- Is diversity an option on this issue?
- The other options fit the evidence.

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3 On the translation of authentein as "bossy," note the definition in BDAG, "to assume a stance of independent authority, give orders to, dictate to ..." (practically = 'tell a man what to do' [Jerusalem Bible]."

4 Elsewhere in 1 Timothy, men are also called to modest behavior with the same word as the women (kosmios ["respectable, appropriate"] in 2:9 and 3:2) and with a word built on the same root (sōphrosunē ["prudence"] in 2:9, 15 and sōphrōn ["prudent"] in 3:2).
Women and Wealth in 1 Timothy
KEN CUKROWSKI

Separate and yet interconnected, the themes of women and wealth play significant roles in 1 Timothy. The investigation of 1 Tim 2:8-15 shows women and immodest displays of wealth—abuses of wealth that may be connected to those in 1 Timothy 5. Later, two passages in 1 Timothy 6 reveal further discussion about wealth. The examination of these themes illustrates just how contemporary antiquity can be.

Women in 1 Tim 2:8-15

Without a doubt, 1 Tim 2:8-15 is one of the most challenging passages in the whole letter. However, a couple of things are clear. First, the problems are specifically related to gender; the men have some specific problems, and the women have some specific problems. Second, the men’s difficulties regard anger and quarreling, and the women’s difficulties regard modesty.

From Super Bowl halftime shows to music videos, we likely think about the problem of female modesty in terms of wearing too little. In the context of 1 Tim 2:9, however, some of the women were wearing too much! Plus, there appears to be a problem not only with what the women were wearing, but also with what they were saying—and perhaps how they were saying it.

In 1 Tim 2:8-15, Paul turns to internal problems that the church is facing. Although Paul addresses both males and females, by far the greater attention is on the females. Attending to both structural and thematic features helps readers to understand this passage.

Structural Features

Perhaps here more than the other passages in 1 Timothy, it is important to recognize the structural features of this passage. First, Paul begins by connecting 1 Tim 2:8-15 to 2:1-7 by means of the hank word “pray.” Paul, however, moves in a different direction from the focus on praying for outsiders (2:1-7). Here in 2:8, Paul stresses how Christians should pray, namely “without anger and quarreling.”

The next two structural features provide both a larger and smaller frame for reading 2:9-15. The larger bracket includes the prepositional phrase “with modesty and moderation” in 2:8 and a shortened version of the phrase in 2:15 (namely, “with moderation”). In fact, the final two words of the whole passage are the phrase “with moderation.” Within 2:9-15, Paul includes another pair of prepositional phrases. This time, the same phrase (namely, “with quietness”) begins and ends 2:11-12.
Finally, it is worthwhile to recognize the two connections between 2:8 and 9. The word *likewise* links the two verses. In addition, the phrase “I desire that” in 2:8 governs 2:9; that is, 1 Tim 2:9 is translated (“I desire that) the women adorn themselves ....

**Key Themes and Terms**

One of the difficulties of this passage is the translation of key words and ideas. For example, how should one translate the phrase *in quietness* in 2:11 and 12? The adjective (*hēsuchios*) is translated as quiet or well-ordered in 2:2. Translators recognize that in calling Christians to pray and “lead a calm and quiet (*hēsuchios*) life,” Paul is not telling Christians they cannot speak! Yet, when the corresponding noun (*hēsuchia*) is used in 2:11 and 12, some translations have “in silence,” which is a possible translation if women’s speaking at all is the issue. However, if how the women are speaking is part of the issue, than a better translation is “with quiet behavior” or “with respect.”

Another difficulty is the piling up of words connected to modesty in 2:9. I offer the following annotated translation as an illustration:

I desire that the women adorn (*kosmein*) themselves in modest (*kosmios*) attire with modesty. (*aidōs*) and *moderation* (*sōphrosunē*).

Paul also shows attention to the idea of modesty in his use of *prepein* (“be fitting, be seemly/suitable”) in 2:10. All throughout the passage, Paul uses terms synonymous or parallel to modesty.

**The Context and Interpretation of the Passage**

In 1 Tim 2:8-15, Paul treats two problems, the first briefly and the second more extensively. In both cases, there is some indication that Paul is dealing with specific problems at Ephesus. Thus, this investigation of both problems will involve some description of the context of 1 Timothy.

**ANGRY MEN**

The context of 1 Timothy points to some evident false teaching in Ephesus (1:3-7; 4:1-4, 7; 6:3-5, 20-21). Notice the following passages from 1 Timothy where we see some probable causes and evidence for the men’s quarreling in 2:8:

They pay attention to myths and endless genealogies that promote useless speculations (1:4).  
Some, while going astray, turn away to fruitless discussion (1:6).  
Avoid godless and silly myths (4:7).  
He is sick with a morbid craving for debates and disputes about words, from which come envy, strife, slanderers, evil suspicions, wranglings of people who have corrupt minds and lack the truth, thinking that godliness is a means of gain (6:4-5).  
Avoid the godless, empty chatter and the contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge (6:20).

The problem in 1 Tim 2:8 is that these arguments are now occurring in the context of prayer! Men seem to be attacking others with their prayers of all things! In contrast, Paul tells the men that the hands they lift in prayer should be *holy hands*. Unfortunately, even the best things, such as prayer, can be co-opted by sinful individuals. Even though angry, quarreling prayers such as these may be rare today, prayer is still sometimes used to preach personal, theological, and political positions. There are prayers to which one cannot, in good conscience, say “Amen.”
Immodest Women

The four cardinal virtues in the ancient world were justice, courage, wisdom, and moderation (sōphrosunē). Of these four virtues, by far the one most associated with women was moderation. Sarah Pomeroy describes sōphrosunē as follows:

The term means “temperance” but also connotes chastity and self-restraint. It was the pre-eminent virtue of Greek women; it is mentioned more frequently than any other quality on women’s tombstones.³

Unfortunately, some women in Ephesus are behaving immodestly. A major question is whether we can learn what these immodest women were doing.

Links Between Women, Widows

If Paul is not speaking about women in general, but rather to a particular problem with immodest women in Ephesus, then what evidence is there to connect the women in 2:9-15 with a specific problem in 1 Timothy? An examination of the two passages reveals a surprising number of substantial links between the women of 1 Tim 2:9-15 and the young widows described in 1 Tim 5:3-16.

Immodest expenditures

In 1 Tim 2:9, Paul cautions women not “to adorn themselves with braids or gold or pearls or very expensive clothing.” Correspondingly, Paul describes the young widows in 1 Tim 5:6 with the word spatula, which means “to indulge oneself beyond the bounds of propriety, live luxuriously/voluptuously” (BDAG).

Good Deeds

In 1 Tim 2:10, Paul remarks that a proper woman adorns herself “with good deeds.” In his contrast between the younger widows and the real widows in 1 Timothy 5, Paul affirms that a “real widow” (5:3) should be “attested for her good deeds and devoted to every good deed” (5:10).

Quiet Behavior

If Paul is concerned with how the women are behaving and speaking in 2:11-12, is there any evidence of unacceptable behavior among the younger widows in 1 Timothy 5? In the language of 1 Timothy 2, do the younger widows exhibit a lack of “quiet behavior” (hēsuchia)? In fact, Paul has at least four descriptions of behavior that is not “quiet behavior.” The younger widows are described as busybodies and idlers (5:13). Apparently their behavior has been so scandalous that it has provided others an opportunity to revile the church (5:14). Paul issues a command to avoid luxurious living in order that younger widows may be without reproach (5:7). Each of these four descriptions is connected to the absence of quiet behavior in other New Testament texts. As evidence, note these passages where hēsuchia is connected to the following items: busybodies (2 Thess 3:11-12; 1 Thess 4:11), idlers (2 Thess 3:11-12), and revile and reproach (1 Thess 4:11-12).

Problems with Teaching

When Paul writes “I do not permit a woman to teach” (2:12), is there any evidence that false teaching is a problem among women in Ephesus? Or, is Paul talking about women teaching in general? From our earlier investigation of the “angry men,” we know that there is ample evidence that the church is under attack from false teaching. Thirteen times Paul uses words associated with teaching (1 Tim 1:10; 2:7, 12; 3:2; 4:1, 6, 11, 13, 16; 5:17; 6:1, 2, 3).
But what about the younger widows? Is there any false teaching connected with them? In 5:13, Paul describes the younger widows as “saying what they should not,” a phrase that is associated with false teaching in Titus 1:11 (namely, “teaching what they should not”). Thus, there is likely a link between the women’s teaching in 2:12 and false teaching among the younger widows in 1 Timothy 5.

**Deception**

Twice Paul uses the language of deception in his illustration treating Adam and Eve—“Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor” (2:14). What evidence is there that the younger widows have been deceived? Paul uses neither the word deceive nor the word deception in 1 Timothy 5. However, it seems highly likely that the younger widows, who “have followed after Satan” (5:15), can be described as deceived.

**Bearing Children**

Finally, what is one to do with the cryptic phrase “she will be saved through the bearing of children” (teknonogia) in 2:15? Interestingly, the verb (teknono mein) appears in 1 Timothy 5 when the younger widows are admonished “to marry, bear children (teknono mein) and manage their households” (5:14). In other words, it is highly unlikely that Paul, in 2:15, is saying that a woman must bear a child to be saved. Rather, the word “bearing of children” (teknonogia) is a compressed way of saying, “Pay attention to your domestic responsibilities.” This interpretation of 2:15 not only fits well with the admonition to the younger widows, but also with other passages in 1 Timothy (e.g., those who “forbid marriage” in 4:3).

Elsewhere in 1 Timothy, Paul also shows care for the state of the home, likely indicating that there are problems in that area. For example, in his instructions regarding elders and deacons, Paul highlights the importance of a strong home. In effect, he also tells potential elders and deacons, “Pay attention to your domestic responsibilities” (3:2, 4-5, 7, 12). Thus, in a context where the home is under attack, and possibly being used as an outpost for false teaching (cf. 2 Tim 3:6-7), such instructions from Paul are not surprising.

In summary, it is difficult to provide an airtight connection between the women of 1 Tim 2:9-15 and the younger widows in 1 Timothy 5. Nevertheless, the evidence is substantial and worthy of consideration. In addition, such a connection explains some of the puzzling features of 1 Timothy 2:9-15.

**The Application of the Passage**

When Christians attempt to apply 1 Tim 2:8-15, the focus is almost always on its words to the women. That consistent focus, however, has not guaranteed a unanimous conclusion. In fact, there are diverse opinions; the following reflection will briefly outline three main options.

**Option 1: A Rule for All Time**

With this first interpretation, people contend that Paul’s instructions do not allow women “to teach or have authority over men” (RSV; 2:12). They point to the appeal to creation in 2:13-14. Seeing that appeal as a proof from scripture, they argue for a hierarchical relationship between men and women, primarily based on the phrase “Adam was created first” (2:13). They also argue that 1 Cor 14:34-35 fits with this interpretation.

Those who disagree with this position point out the difficulty of reading the other admonitions in this passage as rules for all time (see 2:8, 9, and 15). The prohibition against having “authority” is also difficult to apply in a generic sense; in our society, women vote as well as exercise leadership in many ways (e.g., justices, senators, mayors, professors, managers, principals).

Furthermore, in the same way that the men’s problems with anger and quarreling do not reflect problems with men in general, but are connected to the context at Ephesus, so also the women’s problems seen in 1 Tim 2:9-15 do not reflect problems with women in general, but are connected to the context at Ephesus.
Last, opponents point to several other passages where women teach or appear to teach (see Luke 2:38; John 4:29-30, 39, 42; Acts 18:26; 1 Cor 14:19, 31).

Option 2: Specific Instructions for a Specific Problem

Others apply Paul’s admonition in 2:12 on the level of principle; that is, just like Paul gives specific instructions to men in 2:8 because there is a particular problem with some men in Ephesus, so also Paul gives specific instructions to women because there are particular problems with some women in Ephesus, likely connected to the behavior of the younger widows in 1 Timothy 5. In other words, the argument sounds something like the following:

If we had problems with immodest, bossy women teaching false doctrine, then we would tell those women not “to teach or be bossy”5 (2:12); but we don’t have that problem. The principle is “Stop immodest and bossy behavior, as well as false teaching.” Such behavior today should evoke a similar response.6 In fact, Jesus condemns any disciple—male or female—who behaves in an overbearing way (Luke 22:24-26).

Proponents also point to the context and application of 2:8, 9, and 15 on the level of principles. They argue as well that this reading fits well within the context of the younger widows in 1 Timothy 5. Finally, they read the appeal to creation as an illustration—much like the appeal to Eve in 2 Cor 11:3-4—warning the church in Ephesus to avoid deception similar to that experienced by Adam and Eve.

Proponents point out the appeal to creation in 2:13-14 and the apparent contradiction with 1 Cor 14:34-35. Furthermore, they doubt—even if there is a specific connection between 1 Timothy 2 and the younger widows—that the instructions to women in 1 Timothy 2:9-15 would change if the specific problems were solved.

Option 3: Diversity in the New Testament on This Issue

Still others are not concerned whether this passage is understood in the first or second way. They contend that the New Testament has passages that both affirm and restrict the roles of women. In other words, they see attempts to squeeze all the passages about women into one end of the spectrum or the other as forced.

In support, they argue that the New Testament shows diversity on other issues (e.g., metaphors for salvation and the attitude of Christians toward the government). Furthermore, proponents contend that the early church may still have been in the process of working out an answer to the issue of women’s roles, much in the same way that it was still working out the Christian response to slavery.

Opponents question whether there is diversity on the issue of women’s roles. Furthermore, many opponents of Option 3 do not see a problem fitting all the evidence into their interpretation.

Wealth in 1 Tim 6:6-10, 17-19

As we move to the topic of wealth, it is worth considering that the United States is likely the wealthiest nation in all of human history. From one perspective, one might argue that the U.S. is also the most generous, since it gives more developmental assistance than any other country in the world. Unfortunately, the U.S. ranks last (22nd of 22) among the industrialized nations when the aid is calculated as a percentage of the ability to give.7 As a percentage, U.S. giving is at 0.13%. As a point of comparison, Ireland’s rate is over three times the U.S. rate (0.40%), while Norway gives at over six times that rate (0.89%).

The U.S. gave at a rate of 2.79% during the Marshall Plan, the highest in our nation’s history.8 Why has the U.S. become less generous as it has become wealthier? In this context of our vast wealth in America, the church needs to be prophetic, as well as informed about the spiritual danger of wealth. 1 Timothy 6 offers both warnings and constructive advice to the church.