

Fight the Good Fight
1 Timothy 2:8-10 (Week 07) 10/19/2025
Proper Public Prayer

This is my message written prior to being preached. Please excuse the bullet point format and any grammatical mistakes. This is meant to be spoken.

⁸ I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling; ⁹ likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, ¹⁰ but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works. (1 Timothy 2:8-10)

Introduction and Review

- Today we continue our study through **Paul's first letter to Timothy**.
- In **chapter 2 verses 8-10**, which _____ just read for us.
- And in **verses 11-15**, which we will look at next week (Lord willing).
- Paul gives **Timothy instructions** for how **men and especially woman** are to behave in the church.
- **And those instructions are not the same.**
- And one of the things this says, is that Paul (inspired by the Holy Spirit),
- believes **that there are actual and important differences between men and women.**
- A belief shared by the vast majority of people throughout history,
- **and even throughout our world today.**
- **However, this long held truth, is being questioned by some...**
- American **feminist philosopher** and **gender studies scholar Judith Butler** expresses the belief of a growing number of **people in the West** when she says...

Masculine and feminine roles are not biologically fixed but socially constructed. (Judith Butler)

- If **Butler** is right, then the **line between the male and the female** can be erased.
- There are no **inherent reasons** why **women should not behave like men**, and **vice versa**.
- And this view has resulted in a great deal of **gender-confusion**.
- **In fact**, there's confusion about the **word "gender" itself**.
- It **originally** meant a class of things **sharing similar traits**.
- Then in the **Victorian era** it was **became** a **euphemism for a person's sex**.
- Because the word **sex** had become taboo.
- And that became the established definition, gender refers to a **person's biological sex**.
- **However, more recently gender has come to mean an individual's self-perceived sexual identity which may or may not related to their biological sex.**
- **In our current culture many would say, "you are the gender you believe yourself to be."**

- But the Bible stands firmly against this **gender-confusion**.
- It insists that **your gender (your sex) is a God-given reality**.
- It **recognizes** that the identity of every human being is **biological** and **gender specific**.
- And that there are **essential differences** between the **two genders** (male and female).
- These differences go back to the **sixth day of creation**, when

27 ...God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. (Genesis 1:27)

- Creation establishes the true **equality of men and women**.
- Both were created **in the image of God**.
- But they were **also created differently**,
- and that difference is **expressed** in their gender, **male and female he created them**.
- And **given this divinely ordained difference**, it should come as no surprise to anyone
- that God sometimes has **different instructions** for **men and for women**,
- especially in the church, which in **Chapter 3 of 1 Timothy**, Paul calls...

15 ...the household of God, which is the church of the living God... (1 Timothy 3:15)

- **The church** is God's household, **and to preserve order every household has rules**.
- God's rules are found **in the Bible**, His revealed word.
- **And most of His** rules are addressed to all of **His** people all of his children (male and female)
- But there are places, **1 Timothy 2** verses 8-15 **being one example**,
- Where Scripture addresses **men and women separately and differently**.
- **So, when it comes to God's church**, the Holy Spirit does **not hesitate** to say there are differences between men and women.
- Some instructions, while **not inapplicable** to women, are **most necessary for men**.
- Other instructions, although they **have practical implications for men**,
- are **especially appropriate for women**.
- **Now, if you remember last week**, in **verses 1-7**, Paul instructions regarding why his children (male and female) are to Pray for all People.
- And so, on the heels of those **general instructions** Paul adds specific (gender based) instructions for **proper public prayer**. And he begins with...

1. The Place for Prayer

- To the **men of the church** he writes,

8 I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling; (1 Timothy 2:8)

- **Even** though Paul begins with the words **I desire**
- We should understand that this is **not simply his personal wish or opinion**.

- As with all Scripture, Paul as the writer is **being inspired by the Holy Spirit**,
- and he's speaking as **an apostle (a messenger) of Jesus Christ**.
- Also, the word "**desire**" in the **Greek** does not mean a **wish or even a preference...**
- It could be better translated "**will**" **it is my will (as a messenger of Jesus Christ) that in every place the men should pray.**
- And with regards to the word **men**
- Sometimes Bible translators choose to use **man or men or brothers** when the Greek word could be referring to people of **both genders**. But that is not the case here...
- The word "**men**" (**an-dras**) refers to males **as distinct from females**.
- And that doesn't mean that women **can't pray in every place**.
- Or they can't **lift holy hands**.
- Or they **can be angry and quarrelsome**.
- But for reasons we will see, **Paul addresses these instructions specifically to men**.
- And we should understand one more word before going forward.
- The **word pray** here (**proseuchomai PRO-SEE-KO-MY** in the Greek) is a general word for prayer and includes the idea of not only making request of God but **worshipping him as well**.
- So, Paul is not just giving instructions for the act of praying,
- but for proper prayer & worship when the church gathers.
- Which would include, but is not limited to, a regular Sunday morning Church service.
- **And he begins his instructions with the place of prayer.**

prayer is to be offered in every place.

- This certainly refers **every place the church gathers...**
- **When every and wherever we gather, men should pray.**
- But I think this desire for prayer in every place also reflects a desire for prayer to spread to **every place throughout the world**.
- In the **Old Testament**, **God was worshiped in his temple**.
- But now he is to be worshiped **everywhere, every place his people are!**
- And this is the heart of **Missions, to take the gospel to ends of the earth**, to every place!
- **so that** God might be worshiped, **praised, glorified by all peoples**, from every part of this planet.
- We see this alluded to **by the LORD** through the **prophet Malachi...**

¹¹ For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense (which symbolized the prayers of his people) will be offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name will be great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts. (Malachi 1:11)

- And this also fits with the context of this passage,
- In **verses 1-7**, Paul urges all kinds of **prayers for all kinds of people**.

- And then in **verses 3 & 4** he writes...

³ This is good* (Praying for all people is good), *and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴ who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:3-4)

- The God who **desires all (kinds) of people to be saved.**
- The God who **provides the savior Jesus Christ.**
- The God who **sends his servants** into the world to **proclaim the way of salvation.**
- The God who **urges us to pray for all kinds of people.**
- Of course, **this God desires...**

that in every place the men should pray

- The God who **rules and saves the world** deserves **worldwide (every place) praise.**
- There is no place where **God's people cannot pray,**
- and in the end, **as Malachi Prophesized,** there is no place **where we will not pray.**
- And why is **this instruction** given to **men specifically.**
- I think it's **because men,** as leaders, are responsible for making sure prayer and worship take place whenever and wherever (**every place**) the church gathers.
- **And men** must also lead the charge in spreading the gospel to **every place** throughout this world.
- So, we've **seen the place of prayer... and it's every place!** Now we turn to...

2. The Posture of Prayer

- **Verse 8** again....

⁸ I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands... (1 Timothy 2:8)

- Now the most important word in the phrase **lifting holy hands** is Holy
- Which we will look at shortly!
- But I want us to first look at **lifting hands,**
- which is one of several postures of prayer we find in Scripture.
- Sometimes God's word speaks of **bowing the head** or **kneeling** before God.
- In **Psalm 96:6** we read...

⁶ Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker! (Psalms 95:6)

- **Bowing and kneeling** give honor while showing humility to and dependence on God!
- **Other prayers** are best offered **flat on the ground...**
- When **Job** experienced great loss, he...

²⁰ ...tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshiped. (Job 1:20)

- And in **Revelation 7:11** we read...

¹¹ And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, (Revelation 7:11)

- When a person is overwhelmed by either the **troubles** or God's glory,
- the appropriate thing to do is **fall on your face before God**.
- There are also times when **standing to pray** is appropriate.
- At the **prayer of dedication for the temple**...

¹² ...Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands. (2 Chronicles 6:12)

- Here we see both **standing and lifting (spreading) hands in prayer**.
- In fact, standing became the customary way men prayed in the **Jewish synagogues**.
- It was also the **nearly universal practice of the early church**.
- The writings of **many church fathers** indicate that Christians stood for public prayer.
- This is also how **the Puritans many others have throughout church history have prayed**.
- **Because standing is a sign of respect**; when a judge enters his courtroom, **all rise**.
- In the same way, Christians have often stood to pray before the **great Judge over all the world**.
- But **whether we kneel or bow or stand or even fall on our face**.
- We can **also (as Solomon did) spread and lift our hands in prayer**.
- This is not **a sign of being a Charismatic**.
- This is the way the priests customarily worshiped in the OT temple...
- As the **Psalmist wrote**...

¹ Come, bless the LORD, all you servants of the LORD, who stand by night in the house of the LORD! ² Lift up your hands to the holy place and bless the LORD! (Psalms 134:1-2)

- Along with standing, **lifting hands** was also **common in early church**,
- Even **though 1 Timothy 2** is the only place it's mentioned in **the New Testament**.
- In the **early second century Tertullian** alluded to **this passage** when he said...

We Christians pray for all the emperors... looking up to heaven, with our hands stretched out. (Tertullian)

- And finally, the practice of lifting hands is confirmed by **early Christian artwork**.

The murals in the Roman catacombs depict believers raising their hands in prayer & praise.

- This picture is from the catacombs of **Domitilla in Rome**
- It is **believed to be a church leader praying**.

- He stands in **God's presence** to offer prayer on **behalf of God's people**.
- This would correspond to our **Pastoral Prayer**.
- And this **provides insight into** why Paul addresses **this instruction** to men,
- Because, again, men are the ones **who are to lead the church in prayer**.
- **Therefore,**

men should pray, lifting holy hands (1 Timothy 2:8)

- **So why** don't I or **Sean** or **Brian** or **Gary** or **any man who prays** when God's people gather always **lift his hands**?
- **Isn't it commanded in Scripture?** Well, I don't think so.
- As we've seen **hand lifting during prayer** was a common, if not universal, practice in the early church.
- So, Paul isn't commanding that, "men to lift their hands when they pray",
- Because that was what they were already doing that.
- What he was saying was, men when you lift your hands in prayer, when you pray,
- **your hands should be holy.**
- **So, what's the point about the posture of prayer and hand lifting for us!**
- **Well,** first I think it's good for us to see the **various postures of prayer** that Scripture includes and **advocates**.
- We can have in variety both our **private devotions** and in our **public worship of God**.
- We can stand, sit, kneel, bow, even fall on our faces before the LORD!
- And for **some of us** who are **a little more conservative**,
- who don't want to be **mistaken for charismatics**,
- We can feel free to **take a lesson from the early church and lift our hands more often when we pray and worship**.
- **But while our outer posture of prayer may be helpful...**
- What is vastly more important is...

3. The Purity of Prayer

- God wants men, **especially**, to be

⁸...lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling; (1 Timothy 2:8)

- The reference to **holy hands** refers to temple worship in the **Old Testament**.
- God's people consecrated themselves by **washing their hands before prayer**.
- **Cleanliness really was next to godliness!**
- Pools of water could be found all around **the temple mount**.
- And as God's people went up to worship they said...

⁶ I wash my hands in innocence and go around your altar, O LORD, (Psalms 26:6)

- James uses similar language when he writes...

⁸ ...Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. (James 4:8)

- **Clean hands symbolize a pure heart.**
- When Paul mentions the outward sign **of lifted holy hands**,
- This is symbolic of the **inward reality of a holy life.**
- And **that reality was not being experienced** by **at least some in the Ephesian church...**
- Because they were **engaging in the sins of....**

anger and quarreling

- As we **saw several weeks ago**, the false teachers in Ephesus were creating problems,
- Because they were...

⁴ [devoting] themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith. (1 Timothy 1:4)

- And....

⁶ Certain persons, by swerving from these (love), have wandered away into vain discussion, (1 Timothy 1:6)

- So, the false teachers were causing **speculations and vain discussion.**
- And in **chapter 6** we see that this resulted in...

⁴ ...an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, ⁵ and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth... (1 Timothy 6:4-5)

- Clearly the men in the church were engaged in **anger and quarreling.**
- **And you can see how these sins have particular relevance for men.**
- It's true that there are times when **women disrupt the church.**
- **In Philippi Paul had to**

² ...entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. (Philippians 4:2)

- But as a general rule, **men are more likely to be**

angry and quarrel, especially when it comes to **doctrine.**

- Men are critical and competitive; we tend to **argue first and listen later.**
- We would rather be **right than be reconciled.**
- We get **defensive** when challenged and **angry when we don't get our way.**
- **So, the Bible reminds Christian men not to fight.**
- We are to fight the good fight; **we are not to fight with one another.**

- **Anger and quarrels are** harmful to the body of Christ in many ways,
- but especially because **they hinder the church's prayers.**
- **In fact,** Jesus taught that **if we are having a dispute,**
- we should not **come to worship at all** until the matter is settled:

²³ So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. (Matthew 5:23-24)

- A man can **lift up holy hands** in prayer only if he has **a right relationship with his brothers.**
- **Or at least has made every attempt to reconcile with his brother.**
- And of course, this same principle also holds true for sisters in Christ.
- But **reconciliation** is especially important when it comes to **men who lead in the church.**
- Any **Pastor or elder** who represents God's people in prayer must be holy.
- The **psalmist asks...**

³ Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place? (Psalms 24:3)

- In other words, "**Who is qualified to pray on behalf of God's people?**"
- The answer is:

⁴ He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully. (Psalms 24:4)

- There is a **direct spiritual connection** between **personal holiness** and public **prayer.**
- It takes **holy hands and a holy heart** to lead God's people in their prayers.
- **18th Century Theologian Samuel Miller wrote...**

None can hope to attain excellence in the grace and gift of prayer in the public assembly, unless they abound in closet devotion, and in holy communion with God in secret. (Samuel Miller)

- The connection between **the spiritual life** and **the prayer life** holds true for everyone who prays,
- not just elders and not just in public.
- **Peter writes...**

⁷ Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered. (1 Peter 3:7)

- An inconsiderate husband is an ineffective intercessor.
- The **power of prayer** is directly related to its purity.
- The prayers of an **unholy man/or woman will go unanswered,**

- But **James** tells us...

¹⁶ ...The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. (James 5:16)

- Of all the **many reasons** we have to lead **holy righteous lives**,
- **This is among the most compelling:**
- so that God will hear, **answer and work through our prayers.**
- **But we have a problem**, we can be unrighteous and **unholy!**
- We can give into temptation and fall to sins of **anger, quarreling and others...**
- So, how can **unholy men** (or women) **lift holy hands in prayer?**
- We can't come to God like the Pharisee who prayed...

¹¹ ...God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.' (Luke 18:11-12)

- He **lifted his prayer** to heaven with the **hands of hypocrisy.**
- We must, instead come to God **with holy hands of humility,**
- confessing our sin like the **tax collector who prayed...**

¹³ ...God, be merciful to me, a sinner! (Luke 18:13)

- The only **pure prayer** is a prayer that begins with confession and repentance,
- and ends with an **appeal to the only one who makes us holy and righteous.**
- When, **at the end of our prayers**, we say **"In Jesus Name Amen"**
- This isn't a **meaningless tradition** or a **magic formula** to get our prayers answered.
- **It's an acknowledgement of and appeal to the only mediator between God and man.**
- **Jesus Christ** offers cleansing, atonement for sin, holiness, righteousness through his blood.
- **So, the Christian can pray like this:**
- Lord, I know **you answer only the prayers of the righteous,**
- but **answer my prayer anyway**, not because in myself I am righteous,
- but because **Jesus Christ is righteous**, and I am in him.
- On the cross he provided for my righteousness.
- Therefore, I can **lift holy hands** as I enter **your presence in prayer.**
- Whenever we pray **in the name of Jesus**, God will hear us out, **unrighteous though we are:**

¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:15-16)

- So, we've seen the place of prayer, the posture of prayer and the purity of prayer.
- And while all of these have application to all believers (male and female).
- Paul **has directed these instructions** to men who lead the church in prayer,
- and who struggle with anger, quarreling and other sins.

- Paul then turns to **his instruction for women...**
- And **they focus on...**

4. The Propriety of Prayer

- **These instructions** include commands dealing with **women's fashion**.
- And so, **AS MAN**, I approach them with a bit of **fear and trepidation**.
- Especially since this passage has sometimes **drawn pastors into conflict**.
- **John Chrysostom (Chris-Oh-Stum)**, the **bishop of Constantinople**,
- was regarded as the **greatest preacher of his time**,
- until he started preaching against the **lifestyles of the rich and famous**.
- Then the **Empress Eudoxia (You-Dox-IA)** ran him out of town, and he later died in exile.
- What **Chrysostom** preached, **in part**, were these words of the **apostle Paul...**

⁹ likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, ¹⁰ but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works. (1 Timothy 2:9-10)

- No wonder **Eudoxia** was upset!
- Nearly every word **clashed with her (and our) worldly values**.
- **Modesty? Self-control? Propriety?**
- Needless to say, Paul never would have made it on **Madison Avenue**, or **Rodeo Drive**.
- And if these verses seem out of touch with our **contemporary culture**,
- that is all the more reason to **listen to what they say**.
- **Let me ask you this.**
- **Which is more likely:** that the **Bible is out of date** or that **our culture is out of line?**
- **God's Word critiques every culture!**
- And often the Scripture that **most shocks and surprises us**,
- or even angers and offends us, **is the Scripture we most need to hear**.
- Notice that **verse 9** begins with the word

likewise

- Paul is still addressing the subject of **proper public prayer/worship...**
- The context is **the gathering of God's people** (a church service if you will).
- And he **assumes that women will be present** when God's people meet.
- **And perhaps they will even pray.**
- He doesn't specifically **direct women to pray** as he did with the men,
- But in his letter to **the Corinthians he does mention** wives praying in public.

- But his point is that when the church gathers...
- Men are to **pray/worship** the Lord without **fighting**,
- And women are to **pray/worship the Lord** with proper **fashion**.
- And to understand these **verses directed to woman**.
- **It is helpful to** know something about **Hellenistic** (or Greek) culture of that day.
- **When Paul says...**

not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire

- We should know that elaborately braided hair was a sign of **extravagant luxury** in Greek Culture.
- **Professor James Hurley** helps us understand the **social context**:

The sculpture and literature of the period make it clear that women often wore their hair in enormously elaborate arrangements with braids and curls interwoven or piled high like towers and decorated with gems and/or gold and/or pearls. (James B. Hurley)

- Bible Scholar **C. K. Barret** Adds...

The conjunction of a fancy hair style with fancy jewelry was a sign of vanity. Some women spent hours fixing their hair and spangling their coiffures with gems. One ancient sculpture depicts a wealthy lady in her salon, pampered by four attendants. (C. K. Barret)

- And such **opulence** must have been a **temptation to women** in the **Ephesian church**.
- **In Chapter 6 Paul address**

¹⁷...the rich in this present age... (1 Timothy 6:17)

- And in **Chapter 5** in his instructions regarding widows, he speaks of a true widow and...
- ⁶ ...she who is self-indulgent... (1 Timothy 5:6)*

- **So, it seems** that at least some of **the Ephesian sisters** were wealthy,
- and therefore, certainly experience **cultural pressure** from their **pagan friends** to show their wealth through their fashion.
- **Now along with the wealthy**, excessive adornment was also a **characteristic of prostitutes**.
- **Theologian George Knight** suggests that

The reason for Paul's prohibition of elaborate hair styles, ornate jewelry, and extremely expensive clothing becomes clear when one reads in the contemporary literature of the inordinate time, expense, and effort that elaborately braided hair and jewels demanded, not just as ostentatious display, but also as the mode of dress of courtesans and harlots. (George Knight)

- **Harlots** were your regular prostitutes.
- **And Courtesans** were the more **high-class** prostitutes who provided companionship and sexual favors to wealthy and powerful men.
- **But both adorned themselves with elaborate clothes and jewels.**

- **Remember**, too, that **Ephesus** was home to the **goddess Artemis**.
- **Her Temple** is one of the **seven wonders of the ancient world**.
- So, members of the **Ephesian church** would have been exposed to **temple prostitutes**, **with their elaborate dress**.
- **But in contrast to this immoral, luxurious, decadent culture (especially for women)...**
- God desires Christian women to take a stand against everything associated with **sexual immorality, as well as material luxury**.
- **In part**, Paul was telling women not to come to church dressed like prostitutes.
- Such attire was **completely unsuitable for worshiping the Lord**.
- But the apostle was **not simply telling women** what not to wear.
- He was also telling them **what to wear and how to wear it**.
- He uses words like “**modesty**,” “**respectable**,” “**self-control**,” and “**proper**”
- **All of which signify positive virtues**.

Respectability (Greek kos-mi-os) is a form of humility, which is the appropriate attitude for prayer.

- A prayer meeting is no place for a **fashion show**.
- A Christian woman does not go to church to meet men; **she goes to meet God**.
- So, getting ready for church is primarily a matter of **preparing the heart**.
- A woman who **loves to be noticed** must remember with whom she is competing.
- God is the one who ought to receive all our **attentions and affections** in **prayer and worship**.

Modesty (Greek ai-do-us) has sexual overtones.

- Theologian John Kelly says it “**connotes feminine reserve in matters of sex**.”
- It implies that women should not dress in a **seductive or suggestive manner**.
- This extends not only to dress, **but also to demeanor**, to the way a woman carries herself.
- **Flirting** would not be an **appropriate activity** when you come **to worship God**.

Self-control (sōph-ro-synē) is a broader concept.

- **It includes the ideas of** prudence, temperance, discretion, soundness of judgment, and self-control.
- It means to be **sound in mind and having control over your action**.
- So, in public worship (and life in general) God wants **his daughters** to focus on who they are and how they behave, **not what they wear**.
- But that is not to say women cannot **dress nicely or be attractive**.
- What is forbidden here is **not having a hair style**, or **owning jewelry**, or **wearing nice clothes**, but using such things **immodestly or indecently**.
- God does not want his daughters to be **overly concerned with how they look**.

- Calvin's comments here are helpful:

The fault is excessive concern and eagerness about dress. Paul's wish is that their dressing should be regulated by modesty and moderation, for luxury and extravagance come from a desire to make a display, which can spring only from vanity or wantonness... Paul attacks by name certain kinds of immoderation, such as curled hair, jewels and golden rings—not that jewels of gold are completely forbidden but, whenever there is a shining display of them, they tend to bring with them all the evils... which spring from self-concern or unchastity. (John Calvin)

- What **modesty** means in practice may **vary from culture to culture**.
- But **vanity and immorality** come from the heart,
- and the Lord knows **what lies in a woman's heart**.
- And so we ask...

Why does God (through Paul) address these instructions to women?

- Well, it's not because **Christian men** are **permitted to be immodest or indecent**.
- **Nor** is it because **men never acquire a taste for fashion**.
- In **Joshua chapter 7** we read of **Achan**, who stole fine clothes from **Ai** because he saw they had designer labels from Babylon.
- No, the reason women are warned about excessive adornment is the same reason that men are warned about **anger and quarrelling**:
- In each case, **the Bible addresses** a gender related problem area.
- **Women**, in general are prone to **focus their attention on outward appearance**.
- This is as true today, **as it was in Timothy's times**.
- The fashion industry, **the cosmetic industry**, and **the jewelry industry** are supported largely by **females**.
- Yet **God cares little or nothing for outward appearance**.
- Remember what he said to **Samuel** when he went to **anoint David** as the next king of Israel:

7...the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart. (1 Samuel 16:7)

- Therefore, God's standards for feminine beauty stand in direct opposition to the standards **of both ancient and modern culture**.
- **Where the focus was and continues to be on outer as opposed to inner beauty**.
- **AND Men are often part of the problem**.
- By evaluating women primarily by their looks, **men cause women to focus on their appearance**.
- Of course, there must be a **sexual attraction** between a husband and wife.
- But **a single man** who looks **primarily for outward beauty** is not looking at women the way God looks at them.

- If a **woman wants to become beautiful to God**,
- here is the **fashion statement** she ought to follow: **adorn yourself**

with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works

- If **you are a woman** who professes (says with your mouth), *I trust and obey the LORD*,
- Then adorn yourself (not with **opulence**) but with **good works**.
- Some of the **good works** Paul has in mind are listed in **chapter 5**.
- Speaking specifically of widows, but this could apply to all women,
- Paul writes... she should have...

¹⁰ ...a reputation for good works: if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to every good work. (1 Timothy 5:10)

- These are **God's beauty tips for women**.
- A woman who **adorns herself with good works** is **always dressed appropriately**.
- The **Holy Spirit** makes the same point in one of the Bible's **other fashion sections**:

³ Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear— ⁴ but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious. ⁵ For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands, (1 Peter 3:3-5)

- The way to become more **attractive is through godliness, not gaudiness**.
- A woman is made **beautiful by how she serves the Lord, not by what she wears**.
- **True beauty comes** from nurturing the **inward woman**.
- So ask yourself questions like these:
- How much money do I spend on **my appearance**,
- on **clothes, jewelry, cosmetics**, having my hair done?
- How does that compare with my **giving to the Lord's work**?
- How much time do I **spend in front of the mirror**, and how much time do I **spend on my knees**?
- When a Christian woman does look in the mirror (metaphorically),
- **she should look for good works**,
- which are the proof of **genuine faith in Jesus Christ**, as **John Stott** rightly says:

The church should be a veritable beauty parlour, because it encourages its women members to adorn themselves with good deeds. Women need to remember that if nature has made them plain, grace can make them beautiful, and if nature has made them beautiful, good deeds can add to their beauty. (John Stott)

- AND good works are what a man should look for in a woman (and visa versa).

- When a man notices a woman who is devoted to the Lord,
- **who gives good counsel,**
- who has **integrity,**
- who **loves children,**
- who **cares for the sick,**
- he should not say, **“She’s not really that Hot, but she really loves Jesus!”**
- Instead, he should say, **“Now there is a beautiful woman!”**
- A woman who is beautiful in the eyes of God ought to be **beautiful in the eyes of godly men.**
- **Amen!**
- So, **as the church gathers for public prayer, Church service,** etc....
- Our God has instructions for us to follow.
- And while the specific instructions may be different for men and women.
- At their heart, God desires his children to come to him,
- to pray to him, to worship **with pure, holy, godly hearts.**
- He wants our focus to be on Him,
- not on the quarrels we are having with our brothers.
- And not on our own outer appearance.
- So, I would encourage all of us, each and every male and female,
- Before you come to any gathering of God’s people,
- to examine your heart, to confess and repent of any sin.
- To recognize that your righteousness, your holiness, comes from Christ alone.
- So that you might enter God’s holy presence with God’s holy people.
- That he might hear our prayers and receive our worship.
- And we **might bring glory and honor to his Holy Name.**
- Would you join me in prayer!