

“It’s the Lord’s Church Not a Circus!”

1 Timothy 2:1-15

Intro. – 1 Corinthians 14:40 says, *“But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.”* Such is a basic principle for the conduct of the Lord’s Church living in the world. Apparently a young preacher by the name of Timothy was having some problems applying this principle in the local church at Ephesus. The worship assemblies were losing their order. The effectiveness/work of the church was hurting. Why? Because both men and women were ignoring God’s Word. As a result, the church situation was taking on the appearance of a modern day circus rather than the Body of Christ.

Illus. – sadly, in many local churches today this is the case. The preacher might as well be a ring master conducting the entertainment in the three rings. I read of a man who said one of his greatest disappointments early in his life was a boy he saw a tent in a large field. Thinking it to be a circus, he sneaked in and found out it was a tent revival. He continued by saying his greatest disappointment in life came when as an adult he went to a church to seek revival and when he got there it was nothing but a circus!

Purpose: to better understand the God given roles for men and women in the Church

The purpose behind our text is clear. Paul, under the inspiration of God, is instructing men and women to understand their spiritual functions (roles) and then do them. Let’s look more closely at these roles:

I The Men = to LEAD (2:1-8)

A. The Priority of Prayer (v 1a)

1. *“First of all”* = indication that prayer is a significant part of public/corporate worship together.
2. Our hearts must be right with God and each other... = must sense the need and want prayer!
3. When prayer loses importance in a local church, God is unable to bless and use that church...
4. This is the responsibility of the men, the leaders of the church!

B. The Variety of Prayer (v 1b)

- note: there are seven different Gr. Words translated “prayer” = four of them are used in this text:
 1. Supplication = “offering a request for felt need”...
 2. Act of worship = prayers being offered up to God...
 3. Intercession = “to draw near to a person and converse confidently with them”...
 4. Thanksgiving = a key element to prayer in worship...
- note: Daniel, great prayer warrior, practiced this kind of praying (cf Daniel 6:10-11) *“...and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God...”*

C. The Objects of Prayer (v 2)

1. “All men” = no person (human being) on earth is outside the influence of believing prayer!
 - Illus. – Chorus “Jesus Loves the Little Children” – “red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in His sight, Jesus loves the little children of the world.”
2. Note: nowhere in Scripture are we instructed to pray for the dead – emphasis is always on those who are living in this present world.
3. Pray for those in authority = to live peaceful and quiet lives in godliness/holiness.

D. The Reasons for Prayer (v 3)

1. “Good” = “fair/beautiful” = the benefits of prayer simply put are GOOD!
2. “Acceptable” = i.e. it pleases God as long as prayer is done in His will:
 - a. praying selfishly is NOT within the will of God...
 - b. praying for the lost and to make one’s self available to share the gospel IS...

E. The Basis for Prayer (vv 5-7)

1. Prayer is based on the work of Christ = Savior... Mediator...
2. Christ died for all and He has sent you and me to take the gospel to the lost...
 - a. Paul = preacher, apostle and teacher...

- b. God ordains the END (salvation through Christ), as well as, the MEANS (prayer, teachers and preachers etc.)
- 3. Not to pray is to slight the Cross of Christ = "...everyone" or "...all men" key phrase because Christ died for them as well!

F. The Attitude in Prayer (v 8)

- men should pray in worship assemblies = Paul gives 3 essentials for effective prayer:
 1. "*Holy hands*" = clean, pure, blameless life...: with blatant sin can't expect God's answer!
 2. "*Without Anger*" = getting along so far as is our personal responsibility... Romans 12:18 "*If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.*"
 - troublemakers can't expect God to answer...
 3. "*Without disputing*" = without "wrath and dissension" = disagree agreeably.
 4. Effective prayer = right relationship with God and with the brethren!!

Prayer must be done by men leading!

II The Women = to SUPPORT (2:9-15)

- Women's lib and other feminist movements have turned this term (support by submitting) into a dirty word... like flashing red in front of a bull...
- Apostle Paul referred to as a "crusty old bachelor "...
- believe in inspiration of Bible...; so, if anyone has a problem with what the Bible says about women's roles (in the church, home, world) issue isn't with Paul, Peter etc. but with God and His Word!
- "submit" = "to rank under" = in order &/or responsibility but not in value or ability: e.g. Colonel higher rank than a private, doesn't mean colonel a better person...
- submission isn't slavery... but it is recognizing God's order and joyfully obeying and working within it. This is the emphasis in this section in how believing women give evidence of their submissiveness:

A. Modest Dress (v 9)

1. In contrast to artificial glamour of the world, there is true beauty in godly lives.
2. Paul is not forbidding jewelry, makeup, nice clothes:
 - a. is forbidding excessive use of these to the exclusion of a woman's inner beauty.
 - b. "A woman who depends on externals only will soon run out of ammunition!"
 - c. may attract attention but not win lasting respect and affection...
3. "It's getting harder for Christian women to find the right kind of clothes for summer wear.
4. God wants His daughters to major in the inner person rather than the outer person....

B. Good Deeds (v 10)

1. Not that good works are a substitute for physical care – contrasting the cheapness of expensive outward care to the value of Godly character and service in the local church.
2. Must not underestimate the importance Godly women played and are playing in Church history...

C. Quiet Learning (v 11)

1. "Silence" is a poor translation = gives the idea women are never to open their mouths.
2. Same word translated "peaceable" = some were abusing their new freedom in Christ and were creating disturbance in worship assemble and in their service...

D. Respecting Authority (vv 12-15)

1. Assuming or usurping authority over men is the issue at hand.
2. Women and teaching – sure they can teach... but not by assuming authority... such hardly will help keep order in the local church...
3. Paul gives reasons why Christian men are to be leaders
 - a. Creation = man created first: priority doesn't mean superiority... issue = responsibility...
 - b. man's sin = woman was deceived, but Adam sinned with eyes wide open = listened to his wife rather than listened to God.

- c. such reason for disorder today = too many men listening to their wives instead of first listening to God.
 - d. Godly women we know have no desire to “run” things in the church or the home.
4. Kept safe through childbirth = women are given the work of caring for the Church through the home – such is submitting to God’s plan!

Conclusion: I’m persuaded that some local church situations are more a three ringed circus than a body fitted and working together.

Brethren, God has a plan:

Men = you are to lead...!

Women = you are to support (submit)

Work God’s plan and expect a church and not a circus!