

EVANGELICAL REVIEW OF THEOLOGY

VOLUME 15

Volume 15 • Number 4 • October 1991

Evangelical Review of Theology

*Articles and book reviews original and selected from
publications worldwide for an international
readership for the purpose of discerning the
obedience of faith*

GENERAL EDITOR: BRUCE J. NICHOLLS



Published by
THE PATERNOSTER PRESS

equal dignity and equality of men and women and to Scriptural authority. This dual [p. 320](#) commitment has a long and honourable history in the Church, as has been carefully argued and presented within our circles.¹⁴

Finally, one must recognize that an evangelical feminist biblical hermeneutic is attacked from two sides. The conservative nonfeminist evangelicals tend to see the position outlined in this paper not only as quite wrong but so wrong as to suggest that it constitutes denial of Scriptural authority. On the other hand, the nonevangelical feminists tend to see the position outlined here as not taking seriously, or seriously enough, the patriarchal and sexist nature of much of Scripture and/or as naively optimistic (or even self-serving) in its interpretation of the difficult texts as limited. In spite of these risks, I believe that the Biblical data and hermeneutical integrity¹⁵ require such an approach as indicated here.

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Wives and Women's Ministry (1 Timothy 2:11–15)

Paul W. Barnett

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The author's imaginative assumption that the women in this text were wealthy influential wives adds a new dimension to the exegesis of this key passage. By interpreting the text in the context of the preceding and following textual contexts, the author gives fresh insights on this perplexing passage. His call for women to be part of a pastoral team has been advocated by others, including John Stott. Another article in this issue of ERT highlights the complications of the roles of husbands and wives where both are ordained ministers in the same local church. It would be interesting to be able to compare today's situation with that of Aquila and Priscilla ... Or was it Priscilla and Aquila!

I. CONTEXT

1) Immediate Context: The Church Gathering (2:1–10)

The passage is set in a context where Paul is instructing Timothy about the public meeting of the church. The local church is to look out from itself to general concerns. We note the

¹⁴ Cf. e.g. N. A. Hardesty, *Women Called to Witness: Evangelical Feminism in the 19th Century* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1984); J. Hassey, *No Time for Silence: Evangelical Women in Public Ministry Around the Turn of the Century* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986); R. A. Tucker and W. Liefeld, *Daughters of the Church: Women and Ministry from New Testament Times to the Present* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987); Scholer, '1 Timothy 2:9–15' 216–218.

¹⁵

threefold ‘all’ in verses [1–6](#) as Paul exhorts that ‘supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanks-givings be made for all men ... because God our Saviour ... desires all men to be saved ... [through the] one mediator ... Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all’. When the apostle writes, further, ‘I desire then that in every place the men should pray’ (v.[8](#)), it is clear that he is referring not just to congregational life in Ephesus but to church life everywhere.

Paul’s teaching about church life in this passage is not narrowly parochial but universal in its application—it relates to ‘all men’ in ‘every place’. This does not mean, however, that his words might not have been stimulated by circumstances in Ephesus, nor that they might have particular application there (cf. [1:3](#)). p. 322

2. The Social Context: Wealthy/Educated Women in the Church (2:9–10)

The passage about the need for modest dress of women/wives ([1:9–10](#)) belongs to the same universal paraenesis since it is introduced by *hōsautōs* (=likewise), though it is not so rendered in recent translations. That the exhortation is general in character is further strengthened by the similarity of Paul’s words used here, with those of Peter’s in another place.

[1 Tim. 2:9](#)

[1 Pet. 3:2–3](#)

I also want women to dress modestly, withYour beauty should not come from outward decency and propriety, not with *braided hair*adornment, such as *braided hair* and the or *gold* or pearls or *expensive clothes*. wearing of *gold* jewellery and *fine clothes*.

The references in both passages to braided hair, gold [jewellery] and fine/expensive clothes cannot be coincidental. Clearly these restrictions apply to Christian women in both the Pauline and the Petrine churches; they are not local and particular in application but universal and general.

This is not to deny, however, that there may have been specific reasons for Paul to remind Ephesian readers (through Timothy) of this teaching. What is evident is that the exhortation arose in the broad context of early Christianity, even though its application here may perhaps be local. P. B. Payne’s suggestion that the ban on elaborate appearance was conditioned by cultic prostitution at the temple of Artemis in Ephesus, apart from being quite speculative, is contradicted by Peter’s almost identical words, written as they are, to a general readership (see endnote 9).

The women in question are wealthy; of that there can be no doubt, given the nature of the apostolic restrictions on their extravagant clothing, their elaborate hairstyles and their opulent jewellery. Only the wealthy could afford these luxuries. In regard to Peter’s sphere of ministry, we know of two women who would probably have been of at least moderate means—Mary hostess of the Jerusalem Church ([Acts 12:12–13](#)) and the wife of Cornelius ([Acts 10:1–2](#)). Doubtless Peter would come to know other women of the middle and upper classes in the course of his extensive travels, especially when he came to sophisticated Greco-Roman cities like Corinth and Rome.

Paul must have met many wealthy women in the course of his ministry to the elegant cities of Macedonia, Archaea and Asia—in p. 323 particular Corinth and Ephesus which were among the largest and most significant cities in the world of the time. Indeed, the New Testament specifically states that wealthy women were among those converted through his ministry ([Acts 16:15](#); [17:4](#), [12](#), [34](#)). Some at least among these appear to have

provided patronage and protection for the apostle ([Acts 16:15](#); [Rom. 16:2](#)), perhaps occasioning the ill-repute Paul appears to be answering in [1 Thess. 2:3–5](#). That there were some at least among Corinthians who were ‘influential ... of noble birth’ ([1 Cor. 1:26](#)) and that he had friends who were *Asiarchs* (=leading citizens of Proconsular Asia—[Acts 19:31](#)) is clear evidence that Paul had extensive exposure to the rich and famous among the cities where he ministered. He knew about the ways wealthy women dressed, decorated their hair and adorned themselves with jewellery. He, like Peter, must have had opportunity to observe other aspects of their lifestyles as for example their levels of education and the nature of their relationships with their spouses.

It has long been known that the great women of Rome in early Roman Imperial society were wealthy and politically powerful in their own right, especially those who belonged to the Julio-Claudian family. (Under Roman law, neither marriage nor divorce meant the transfer of the woman’s property/wealth to their husbands.)

It is now becoming clear that numbers of women in the Greek and Asian cities in which Paul lived were also famous in their own right as patronesses of the arts.¹

The most predominant citizen of Proconsular Asia, of which Ephesus was the leading city (if not the capital, which was probably Pergamum) was the *Archiereus* of the Imperial Cult. This person presided at the annual *Koinon Asians*, the representative council of the province, and also officiated at the numerous public festivals of the Cult of Rome. Inscriptional evidence reveals, quite remarkably, the existence of no less than fifteen *archiereiai* over a period of two centuries and that these women high priests often held this high and prestigious office in their own right, quite independently of their husbands. Frequently their status derived from a distinguished father.² p. 324

The widespread modern belief that all women in antiquity were invariably eclipsed by men and that Paul is reinforcing a chauvinist status quo appears not to be well founded.

In fact the exhortations to wealthy women by Paul and Peter suggests that the opposite was the case. Is it because *wealthy* women customarily dress and decorate themselves expensively that they are now enjoined by Paul and Peter, as Christian women, to do so modestly and circumspectly? Paul’s exhortation may be directed, in the first instance, to these women *praying* in church in modest, unflamboyant clothing. The *hōsautōs gynaiкас* ... of v.9, following injunctions to men praying could be understood in that way and indeed was so understood by Chrysostom.³ To be sure, women/wives prayed in church according to [1 Cor. 11:5](#).

Is it because *wealthy* women often expressed themselves elsewhere (e.g. in philosophic discourse in private salons) that Paul, for his part, calls for Christian women/wives to limit themselves in speaking in the public meeting of the church? It is taken for granted that a wealthy woman in Graeco-Roman society was an educated woman, capable of reading, writing and speaking. It should not be unnoticed that both apostles exhort these (wealthy/educated) women to be *submissive*. Peter enjoins wives’ submissiveness (*hypotassomenai*—[1 Peter. 3:15](#)), to their own husbands in terms of their

¹ See, for example, R. Kearsley, ‘Women in Public Life in the Roman East: Iulia Theodora, Claudia Metrodora and Phoibe, Benefactress of Paul’, *Ancient Society* (Macquarie University) 15 (1985), 124–137. Cf. D. Magie, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor*. (Princeton, 1950), 1518 n.50; R. MacMullen, ‘Women in Public Life in the Roman Empire’, *Historia* 29 (1980), 213–228.

² See R. A. Kearsley, ‘Asiarchs, Archiereis, and the Archiereiai of Asia’, *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*, 27 (1986), 183–192.

³ Quoted R. Y. K. Fung, ‘Ministry in the New Testament’ in *The Church in the Bible and the World*, Ed. D. A. Carson (Exeter, 1987), 197.

lives (3:2) whereas Paul writes ‘a woman should learn in ... full submission’ (*en pasē hypotagē*—1 Tim: 2.11).

It is suggested, therefore, that the reference to women’s dress, hairstyle and jewellery points to a social context which bears on the exegesis of [1 Tim. 2:11–15](#). It was by no means a narrow or local context since it appears in the writings of both Peter and Paul. In Paul’s case the paraenesis occurs as part of a generalized passage about the conduct of prayer within the churches. The presence in the churches of wealthy, therefore educated and articulate, women called for some comment. Now that they were Christians, how were such women to relate to their husbands at home? How were they to relate to their husbands in public life and in the church? How were they to present themselves in dress and adornment in public? How were they to conduct themselves in the public life of the church? [1 Pet. 3:1–7](#) and [1 Tim. 2:9–15](#) provide some answers to those questions.

This does not mean, however, that the teaching in these Petrine/ Pauline passages is thereby limited in application to wealthy/educated p. 325 women. The presence of wealthy women in church was a historical catalyst which raised the more general question. Problems posed by women from this socio-educational background created the need to address these questions in broader ways, as relating not merely to wealthy women, but to women and wives in general. This Paul does in the passage under discussion, which we will now look at in more detail.

II. EXEGESIS

This text consists of three parts:

- a. A positive statement: [how] a wife/woman should learn
- b. A negative statement: a wife/woman should not teach
- c. The reason for (*gar*) this positive/negative statement.

Parts (a) and (b), the positive and negative statements, occur in chiastic form (A.B. B.A.) as follows:

A *gynē en hēsychiā manthanetō en pasē hypotagē*
B *didaskēin de gynaiki ouk epitrepō*
B *oude authentein andros*
A *all’ einai en hēsychiā*

(a) [How] a wife/woman should learn

What is meant by *gynē* While *gynē* can mean woman or wife the latter meaning is to be preferred given the reference to childbearing in v.15. Thus the passage appears to be directed to *married* women in the first instance, despite the preference of the translations for the more general word. Although surprising to us today, it is probable that women then were naturally thought of as wives/mothers and that to be unmarried/childless was regarded as a state of womanhood, which was in some way qualified. The same applies also to men who were naturally thought of as husbands and fathers. It was customary for parents to arrange marriages for both sons and daughters while they were still infants.

So much attention has been focused on the negative statement (b), not permitting a woman to teach, that the positive statement has been ignored. Yet it is clear that Paul encourages the wife to ‘learn’, the content of which must refer to the learning of Christian doctrine in the public teaching in church. The importance of women learning goes back to Jesus, who, it will be remembered, commended Mary for desiring to be taught by him, in contrast with the busily domestic p. 326 Martha ([Lk. 10:38–41](#)). This was a new thing and

must be seen against the background of Judaism where it was forbidden that women should learn the Torah. In the Talmud is written: ‘may the words of the Torah be burned rather than be handed over to a woman’ (*y. Sota* 8, 10a). Women were not even permitted to say the Benediction after a meal (*m. ber.* 7.2). That Christian women were encouraged to learn was a new departure.

Her learning, however, was to be characterized by two attitudes. (i) *En hēsychiā* as used elsewhere by Paul indicates that the meaning is ‘in quietness’ rather than ‘in silence’ ([1 Thess. 4:11](#); [2 Thess. 3:12](#); [1 Tim. 2:2](#)).

This phrase must be important since it is repeated as the fourth line in the chiasmus. It implies a spirit of receptivity, a contentment of spirit, an absence of clamour and disputation. The phrase is probably connected with the one following.

(ii) To whom is the woman to be *en pasē hypotagē*, her husband or the teacher of the church? The injunction that wives be subject to husbands by the apostles Paul (*hypotassēssthai*—[Eph. 5:22](#); [Col. 3:18](#); [Tit. 2:5](#)) and Peter ([1 Pet. 3:1–6](#)) point to the husband as the object of her submission. The context of the passage, however, suggests that it is to the teacher from whom she ‘learns ... the sound doctrine’ in the church, that she is to be subject (cf. [1 Tim. 1:10](#)). Who is this teacher? According to the very next passage in the letter Paul states that the *episkopos* is to be ‘able to teach’ (*didaktikos*—[3:2](#)). In all probability, therefore, the one[s] from whom the wife/woman learns in quietness and full submission is the teacher of the sound doctrine in the church, the *episkopos*.

Why was it necessary for Paul to write in this way? Was it because wealthy/educated women may have proved disruptive to the order of the congregation? Was there a particular problem where the *episkopoi* were of relatively poorer means and of lesser education and ability? If such were the teachers from whom the women learned, then it must have been seen as appropriate to enjoin quietness and full submission.

(b) A wife/woman should not teach

Paul’s ‘I do not permit’, which appears in the present tense, should not be taken to mean his merely personal preference given on this one occasion and which readers other than the original Ephesians could regard as optional.⁴ p. 327

What then does Paul mean by ‘to teach’ (*didaskēin*)? This is an activity in which Paul was engaged; he is ‘a ... teacher of the nations’ ([1 Tim. 2:7](#); cf. [2 Tim. 1:11](#)). His delegate and co-worker Timothy is encouraged to ‘command and teach’ ([1 Tim. 4:11](#); cf. [6:2](#); [2 Tim. 4:1](#)). Paul instructs Timothy, ‘The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to *teach* others’ ([2 Tim. 2:2](#)).

That the *presbyteros-episkopos* is in mind here is clear from Paul’s words to another delegate, Titus: ‘appoint *presbyteroi* in every town (in Crete) as I directed you ... an *episkopos* must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been *taught* so that he can encourage others by *sound doctrine* ...’ ([Tit. 2:5, 9](#)). According to the passage following our crucial text, an *episkopos must (dei)* ... be a skilful teacher (*didaktikos*).

The view of J. P. Meier⁵ that the *episkopos* was a *presbyteros* who over a period of time was established as of proven capability in ‘preaching and teaching’, and therefore worthy of ‘double honour’ (= honorarium, *dip̄lēs timēs*—5:17) is attractive. It is noteworthy that both references to *episkopos* in the Pastorals are in the singular and both relate to the role

⁴ For the technical discussion of the meaning of *epitrepō* (=I permit) and the significance of the present tense see D. J. Moo, ‘The Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2.11–15: A Rejoinder’, *Trinity Journal* 2 BS (1981), 199–200.

⁵ J. P. Meier, ‘PRESBYTEROS in the Pastoral Epistles’, *CBO* 35/3 (1973), 325ff.

of teacher of the faith. It could be argued that the most appropriate synonym for *episkopos* in these letters is *didaktikos* ('=skilled teacher'; cf. [2 Tim. 2:24](#)).

It appears that 'to teach' refers to the teaching office in the congregation as exercised by one or more elders who were duly recognised as *episkopos*. Our passage does not permit a wife/woman to exercise this ministry. The passage immediately following asserts that the *episkopos/didaktikos* is a man ('a husband ... *his* family ... *his* children'). The negative prohibition against a wife/woman followed by the positive description relating to a man appear to be strong grounds for a wife/woman not occupying the office of teacher to the church.

This restriction, however, is not absolute. Women are encouraged to teach the faith to other women ([Tit. 2:3-4](#)) and, by inference, to children ([2 Tim. 1:5](#); [3:15](#)). It should be noted that the apostle, neither here nor elsewhere, withdraws his approval of women prophesying (cf. [1 Cor. 11:5](#)). Thirty years later there is reference to a 'prophetess' (*prophētis*) in nearby Thyatira. That she is spoken of negatively by John is not because she was a prophetess *per se* but that she was a *false* prophetess ([Rev. 2:20](#)). Paul's remarks to Timothy in this passage appear to be stimulated by the desire of some (wealthy/educated?) p. 328 women to occupy the office of *episkopos/didaktikos* in the congregation.

The third line of the chiasmus contains the word *authentein*, about which so much has been written. A measure of its significance is that *New Testament Studies* has published two articles on the meaning of this word in the 1980s, one by G. W. Knight (1984) and the other by L. Wilshire (1988).⁶ Wilshire's study is of particular importance in that it makes use of the now available database resources of the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (University of California). The TLG is well advanced and when completed will contain approximately 63 million words from about 3000 authors spanning the thousand years beginning from the time of Homer 600 BC.

Using the references to *authentein* in the major lexicons Knight investigated a dozen or so occurrences from antiquity and concluded that 'the broad concept of "authority" is present everywhere' (p. 150). The resources of the TLG, however, enabled Wilshire to investigate more than three hundred usages. What does Wilshire find in relation to the use and meaning of *authentein* in [1 Tim. 2:12](#)?

Wilshire finds against Knight that 'there is no recognised meaning of this term. Indeed it is a time of a multiplicity of meanings ... several meanings of the word are in circulation' (pp. 124, 130). In the epoch roughly contemporaneous with Paul *authentein* is used by some authors to mean 'murder/murderer' and by others to mean 'to have authority'. He notes that Christian writers Eusebius and Chrysostom always use the word to denote 'authority over'. What, then, is Wilshire's conclusion? With due caution this scholar suggests that Paul's meaning should be determined by the word's use in context in [1 Tim. 2](#). That is, it is the notion of 'authority' which is in the apostle's mind. Moreover, he concludes that 'One must always take seriously interpretations within the traditions of the church' (131). In other words, Wilshire, while rejecting Knight's generalizations based on the small sample available to him, nonetheless appears to have reached the same conclusion, though this is implied rather than stated outright.

From my point of view, since *authentein* cannot, in context, mean 'murder/murderer' it must therefore mean 'authority over' and this, surely, is confirmed by the interpretation consistently found in the Church Fathers.

⁶ G. W. Knight, 'AYTHENTEIO in reference to Women in 1 Timothy 2.12', *NTS* 30 (1984), 143-157. L. E. Wilshire, 'The TLG Computer and further reference to AYTHENTEIO in 1 Timothy 1.12', *NTS* 34 (1988), 120-134.

To what, then, does *authenthein* refer? Ronald Fung takes it to mean p.329 ‘any exercise of ecclesiastical authority over a man’.⁷ The chiasmic structure (A.B. B.A.) suggests otherwise. Since *hesychia* appears twice (A ... B) signifying synonymous parallelism it seems likely that *didaskhein ... gynaikei ouk epitrepō* = *oude authenthein andros*. (The *oude* need not necessarily introduce a completely new thought—see [Gal. 1:12](#)). This means that ‘to teach’ (in the church) signifies ‘to exercise authority over’ the ones who are learning.⁸

Who then is the *andros* that the wife/woman is not to have authority over by teaching? The same ambiguity exists with *anēr* as with *gynē* which can mean woman or wife. Is *anēr* a male or a husband? If it is accepted that *gynē* (v. 11) = wife, it is consistent that *anēr* = husband in this passage. This would mean that, in the public life of the church, a wife should not exercise the teaching office of the *episkopos* to (= exercise authority over) her own husband or any other husband in the congregation.

This does not, however, prevent her from exercising a *ministry* to her husband and other husbands in the church. According to 1 Cor. 11 she may both pray and prophesy in the church, yet with her head covered indicating that she ‘honours’ her husband as her head (cf. vs. 4, 5). Praying/prophesying, however, are charismatic, not ‘official activities within the *sōma*. Wives/women were not discouraged from these ministries.

The position of the full-time, remunerated, *episkopos* ... *didaktikos*, however, was different. The very character of this office meant the exercise of a powerful ongoing authority over the gathered congregation, including over the husbands.

The flow of the apostle’s exposition is important. It must be kept in mind that our review passage is followed immediately by the *episkopos* passage. [1 Tim. 2:9–15](#) should be read with one eye on [3:1–7](#). If this is correct, Paul appears to be implying that the *episkopos*, as an *aner*/husband will be hindered in the management of ‘his own family’ ([3:4](#) cf. [3:12](#)) if, within the church, he is taught by (= subject to the authority of) a *gynē*/wife, whether his own or another’s. If in public he is under authority to a wife, his own or another’s, how can he exercise manage his household in private? And if he can’t manage his household how can he manage the church of God (see [3:4–5](#))?

This teaching does not relate narrowly to relationships between a p.330 would-be woman teacher and an *episkopos* within a church. The *episkopos* is more than a teacher; he is a role model to all married men with the church (see [3:1–7](#)). His moral uprightness, his stable marriage, his well-managed household are not just job-qualifications. He is to be an exemplar, a *typos*, whose lifestyle embodies behaviours which are to be imitated, and, in time to characterize every husband within the church in which he is a teacher. The home life of every family within the congregation is to be influenced by the carefully set example of the *episkopos*. (The concept of the minister as a role model to members of the congregation is, of course, often found within the New Testament as the frequent use of *typos* and *mimētēs* indicate.)

(c) Paul’s reason for (gar) this positive/negative statement (vs. 13–14)

Two reasons are given for the apostle’s ruling in vs. [11–12](#), both of them based on [Gen. 2–3](#).

(i) Man’s temporal priority over woman in [Gen. 2](#) is the first reason given why women should not exercise authority over men as teachers in the church.

A clear parallel exists between [1 Tim. 2](#) and [1 Cor. 11](#). Here the praying/prophesying woman must not dishonour her ‘head’ (i.e. her husband) by ministering with her head

⁷ Fung, 200.

⁸ C. Blomberg, ‘Not Beyond What is Written’, *Criswell Theological Review* 2/2 (1988), 410–417.

uncovered. It is because man precedes woman in creation and because woman was taken from man that the man is to be regarded as her 'head'. Certainly husband and wife mutually depend on one another ([11:11](#)) just as, it is assumed, God and Christ mutually depend on one another. Nonetheless, God is the 'head' of Christ and the man is 'head' of the wife. The basis of this headship is derivation. Woman had her origin in man just as, it is implied, the incarnate Christ had his origin in God.

A wife/woman's assumption of the office of *episkopos* in the church would be to overturn the principle of headship and therefore jeopardise the God-ordained basis of husband-wife relationships within marriage. What is on view in the church in the person of the *episkopos* must strengthen, not weaken, marriages. It is submitted that Paul's use of [Gen. 2](#) in [1 Tim. 2:13](#) is similar to his use of that passage in [1 Cor. 11](#).

(ii) It may appear that Paul is disqualifying the woman from teaching because 'Eve ... the woman was deceived and became a transgressor' as if women are therefore more gullible or sinful. This, however, would be contrary to another passage where the entry of sin is attributed to Adam ([Rom. 5:12, 17](#)). Moreover, why then would [p. 331](#) women be permitted to teach other women or children or to pray/ prophesy?

More careful examination, however, suggests that what is advanced here is not a second reason stated negatively against Eve. Rather, it is a continuation of the first reason as the words in the original indicate: *Adam gar ... kai Adam ouk*. Adam was formed first and Adam was not deceived (That 'Eve ... was deceived and became a transgressor' is gratuitous and parenthetical). Paul's arguments are not based on some supposed doctrine of female credulity but purely on the text of [Gen. 2](#). A man should teach because Adam was created first and Adam was not deceived (first, but, as it were second). In other words the reason a man should teach are related to Adam—his primacy and his resistance to transgression, not on a supposedly low opinion of women.

What then of the very difficult [v.15](#) about whose meaning there have been many suggestions. No proposed solution is without difficulties. For example, the *teknogōnia* appears to be too general in meaning to describe the great act of childbearing through which the Messiah was born. Again, the salvation for which she aspires is, according to Pauline use elsewhere, too specifically eschatological to denote deliverance through the dangers of childbirth.

It seems clear that the apostle's words bear on the pastoral situation he is addressing in the present context, [1 Tim. 2:9–12](#). It should be noted that the noun 'woman' (or 'women') does not appear in the original text. The translators' uncertainty about whether to use the singular or plural is understandable given that the text reads '*she* shall be saved ... if *they* continue in faith etc'! My suggestion is that a chiasmic structure may be discerned here, as follows:

women ... to dress modestly with ... propriety (*sōphrosynēs*)
a woman should learn in quietness and full submission
she shall be saved
(if) they continue in ... propriety (*sōphrosynēs*).

It is probable that Paul is addressing problems associated with wealthy (and therefore *educated* women) in the church throughout this passage. He begins the first line with 'women ... in propriety'; he concludes in the fourth with 'they ... in propriety'. Is he not speaking to the same group? (Yet not in a way that would altogether exclude women not belonging to that socio-economic group.)

Since the middle lines address 'a woman ... she', it seems logical that 'she shall be saved' relates in the first instance to the 'woman [who] is [not] to teach or to have authority over a man'. This 'woman' [p. 332](#) is, in our view, an aspiring *episkopos*, a

remunerated teaching elder in the congregation. This implies her willingness or desire to turn from *teknogōnia* in order to fulfil the full-time role as teacher of the church. If this is a correct reading of the context, Paul is discouraging this attitude and arguing that a wife's role as a mother is paramount and should not be abandoned for the sake of the office of *episkopos*. Let such a woman understand that her path to salvation means accepting the role of Christian motherhood. Then, shifting to the plural in addressing wealthy wives/women in particular (but also wives/women in general), he adds that salvation is not arrived at merely by *teknogōnia* but only as they 'continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety', that is as they confirm their ongoing *Christian* commitment.

III. OTHER EXEGETICAL APPROACHES

Having proposed a particular exegesis of the passage we may briefly note some other views. Broadly speaking these fall into two classes. The first argues that there was a specific, historical, problem in the church at Ephesus. Thus, for example, it has been argued a heresy, or heresies, were entering the church at Ephesus through false teachers and these were influencing a number of women in the church.⁹ The very diversity of opinions as to the nature of the crisis in Ephesus warns us about the improbability of this approach.¹⁰

On this view, if we may for convenience state in general terms, Paul's teaching in [1 Tim. 2:11-15](#) is so conditioned by the crisis in the church at Ephesus that the passage has only limited application outside its original context. While there is evidence in the Pastorals for the activities of false teachers and indeed of their influence over some women it is doubtful that such data impinge on [1 Tim. 2:11-15](#) since the immediate context of that passage related to *all men ... in every place*. The passage is too general to be explained by such elaborate and specific reconstructions, which as we have noted differ from one another. It should be observed, moreover, that such reconstructions depend on combining the references of both First and Second [p.333 Timothy](#), as if directed to the same historical situation, an assumption which is to be doubted. First Timothy refers only once to wayward women, the younger widows ([5:15](#)). But there is nothing to connect these widows with the women addressed in [2:9-15](#).

The more common approach, the socio-cultural, suggests that Paul is merely repeating the [alleged] opinion of the day, namely that women were intellectually inferior and, accordingly, were to remain in silence in the church. As a result of the emancipation and liberation of women, through a long and painful process within history, however, Paul's views are now understood to be clearly anachronistic and should be dispensed with at this point. So the argument runs. It is, however, doubtful that all women in Graeco-Roman times were regarded as inferior. There is some evidence, at least, to the contrary.

The view proposed here is that Paul is addressing the general question of the role of women in the congregation as stimulated by the presence there of numbers of wealthy and presumably articulate women. As I see it, Paul's negative response is not in terms of a woman's inability to occupy the office of *episkopos* ... *didaktikos* (= bishop/teacher) but rather what effect this incumbency would have on marriages within the church and indeed on the value of the mothering role. Paul's concern is not superficially cultural but

⁹ P. B. Payne, 'Libertarian Women in Ephesus. A Response to Douglas J. Moo's Article "1 Timothy 2.11-15: Meaning 2 and Significance",' *Trinity Journal* 2 NS (1981), 185-190.

¹⁰ C. Kroeger, 'Ancient Heresies And a Strange Greek Verb', *The Reformed Journal* 29, (1979), 12-15. See also A. Padgett, 'The Pauline Rationale for Submission: Biblical Feminism and the *hina* Clauses of Tit. 2.1-10', *E.Q.* LIX/1 (1987), 39-52; 'Wealthy Women at Ephesus', *Interpretation* XLI/(1987), 19-31.

profoundly creational. What happens in the church must not overturn, deny or detract from the roles and relationships of men as husbands and fathers and women as wives and mothers which are rooted in the very creation of God.

IV. IMPLICATIONS

It hardly needs to be stated that the matter of women's ministry is deeply divisive within the Christian Community. If this passage is held to be applicable today, the implication would be that a woman may not be the principal teacher in the congregation. Paul appears to be concerned to hold in due equilibrium the delicate balance of husbands and wives within the families of the churches. The view taken here is that Paul's concerns are not purely cultural, to be confined in their application to his era.

However, not all congregations today are family churches. Many are youth congregations in schools and universities; many are single sex congregations in girls' schools and women's colleges, hospitals and prisons. Moreover, the team ministry is increasingly seen to be the way forward in our modern industrialized cities; the value of the mono-ministry is increasingly questioned. p. 334

If women prayed and prophesied in the churches, if they were encouraged to learn—as they are in this passage, if the older taught the younger, if they worked alongside Paul in the work of evangelism—then there is no good reason of exegesis or hermeneutics which would limit their ministries in those and related areas today. If [1 Tim. 2:11-15](#) restricts women from becoming the senior teacher to the family-congregation there appears to be no reason why they should be prevented from the whole range of pastoral, didactic or sacramental ministry under the leadership of the senior teacher in a team or in their own right in specialist, single sex congregations.¹²

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The Oppression of Asian Indigenous Women

Victoria Corpuz

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Asia has the largest number of indigenous people in the whole world. The total population of indigenous people in the world is 200 million and 150 million of these are found in

¹² 12. See also M. A. G. Kaykin, 'The Fading Vision? The Spirit and Freedom in the Pastoral Epistles', *EQ* LVII/4 (1985), 291–305. D. J. Moo, '“1 Timothy 2.11–15: Meaning and Significance”', *Trinity Journal*, 1/1 (1980), 62–83. C. D. Osburn, 'AYTHENTEIO (1 Tim. 2:12)', *Restoration Quarterly* 25/1 (1982), 1–12. P. Perkins 'Women in the Bible and its World', *Interpretation*, (Jan. 1988), 33–44