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judgment on self-seeking people (cf. also his comment in a letter to Thurneysen of Sept. 4, 1914, RT, p. 27). It is war against those who are already at war in their inner self: the solution to war is to call on God to have mercy on us, and so Barth appeals to the congregation to have a deep, abiding confidence in God and his wisdom, rather than to philosophize. This marks a distinct change from the earlier sermons and is one of the clues that Barth is beginning to spend more time wrestling with the text.

In these Safenwil days Barth spent a lot of time preparing his sermons; two whole days would be given over to a single sermon and he might begin five times and only finally finish Sunday morning or late Saturday night "fortified with strong coffee" (RT, pp. 12,41). At first, as we have seen, his topic would come from the events of the times rather than from the Bible. In 1912, for instance, he allowed the sinking of the Titanic to inspire "a monstrous sermon on the same scale" (Busch, p. 63, from Homiletik, 1966, p. 98). But later the topics themselves came from the Bible and the sermons had more a theological bent than a social or political one.

In 1916 Barth was finally talking about how crucial the Bible was. "I began to read it as though I had never read it before. I wrote down carefully what I discovered, point by point . . . I read and read and wrote and wrote" (Busch, p. 98). What Barth was reading was the Bible and he was reading it with a greater expectancy (WG, p. 121). "And so when this preacher climbs up into the pulpit he comes to speak to the needs of people as one who has himself been questioned by God — and who thus speaks the word of God" (p. 123).

### Preaching as a Continuing Struggle

There were times when Barth was dissatisfied with his preaching, for there is nothing automatic in sermon preparation. In a letter to Thurneysen he wrote, "I preached today with the clear impression that this cannot as yet get through to our people . . . because it is still far from getting through to me myself" (RT, p. 32, Sept. 19, 1915). With a letter of September 4, 1914, he enclosed for Thurneysen the sermons of the last two Sundays in August:

You will look at them not as though they were finished products but only as experiments. We are really all of us experimenting now, each in his own way and every Sunday in a different way, in order to become to some degree masters of the limitless problem . . . the providence of God and the confusion of man . . . I want more and more to hold them both together. Sometimes I have more success, sometimes less (RT, pp. 26f).

It was in these years that Barth wrestled with the Bible on another level as he struggled to interpret Romans. This struggle drove Barth to re-read Scripture and earlier theologians so that he could learn theology all over again. Contrary to the critiques made by some reviewers, this constant probing into the Bible was not making Barth more dogmatic. He maintained a strange openness toward the Bible. God spoke in it but was not boxed in by it. Preachers preached but didn't always grasp what God was up to.

At Pentecost [1915] I preached on Jeremiah 31:31-34 — middling! You, too, are most certainly aware of these depressing ups and downs, but actually there is a great wisdom in it and above all it is a necessity in our whole situation of which we cannot wish to rid ourselves. Why should not the congregation notice that we stand under this necessity and that our production of sermons is not a mechanical process? How is there wisdom in it! — I mean that one does not so easily think highly of himself if every three or four weeks he is able to produce only some such weak little sermon . . . (RT, pp. 29f, May 25, 1915).

Now here we see Barth willing to admit a weakness in his struggle to preach, and to recognize that sermon production is not mechanical. Out of his struggles in preaching grew those con-

cerns which gave rise to his theology, in some after some of which he sought to understand the ways of God like in a rather long sermon.

It is not often that one who preaches reflects so carefully on the task. However successful Barth's sermons were — and the low attendance at the Safenwil church might argue that they were not popular — the principles about preaching that he derived are useful. We are reminded that good preaching is rightly a struggle, and that it must reflect the preacher's own attempts to hear God speak in the Bible. These principles came out of the Safenwil experience. In Barth's sermons of 1914 we discover a lesson in homiletics one does not often find in homiletics books.

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## INQUIRY

*(Questions, proposals, discussions, and research reports on theological and biblical issues)*

### WOMAN SHALL BE SAVED: A CLOSER LOOK AT 1 TIMOTHY 2:15

**By Mark D. Roberts, Ph.D. Candidate in New Testament, Harvard University.**

*Let a woman learn in silence with all submissiveness. I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to keep silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet woman will be saved through childbearing, if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with modesty.*

1 Timothy 2:11-15

In the past decade, few biblical passages have attracted as many and diverse interpretations as 1 Timothy 2:11-15. Those who espouse traditional roles for women in the church wield these verses as a coup de grâce of an argument prohibiting female teachers. Conversely, those with egalitarian tendencies fret about the exclusionary implications of this passage and about the apparent contradictions between it and others of the Pauline corpus (notably Gal. 3:28 and 1 Cor. 11:5). "Biblical feminists" attempt to relativize these verses, seeing them as conditioned by and limited to a first-century historical situation. Others dismiss these verses as not written by Paul, thus tending to ignore them. (Even if Paul did not write 1 Timothy, the letter still reflects Pauline tradition and forms a part of our New Testament canon. We must, therefore, consider its teaching as authoritative. For the sake of this essay I assume Pauline authorship.)

Since most recent interpretations focus on the prohibition against women teachers (2:12) and the supporting reasons (2:13-14), they usually ignore the concluding verse 15: "Yet

woman will be saved through childbearing, if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with modesty." Yet this, I contend, presents the most theologically perplexing claims of the entire passage. (Even biblical translations differ widely in their interpretations. My translation resembles the RSV, though following the Greek more literally. Where the RSV translates "if she continues," the original in fact reads "if they continue" [*ean meinōsin*]. This change of person in the original, preserved in the KJV in spite of its awkwardness, is crucial for a correct understanding of the verse.)

On the surface, the statement "woman will be saved through childbearing" seems innocent enough. But how can it be that a woman will be saved *through childbearing*? In Pauline teaching we are saved through Christ (Rom. 5:9), through confessing that He is Lord and believing in His resurrection (Rom. 10:9), through the gospel (1 Cor. 15:2), and by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8). The other Pastoral Epistles, besides 1 Timothy, reiterate the point that we are saved by the action of God, not through our own activity. 2 Timothy 1:9 records that God "has saved us . . . not in virtue of our own works." Titus 3:5 concurs that God "saved us not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of His own mercy." Never does one's personal action, apart from receiving God's gift in faith, earn salvation. All people, men and women, are saved through the work of God in Christ, and by nothing else.

Some have seen in "woman shall be saved through childbearing" a reference to the birth of Christ. The phrase *dia tēs teknogonias*, normally translated "through childbearing," can indeed be rendered "through the birth of the child." While this interpretation correctly avoids the implication that each woman is saved by her own work of childbearing, it seems only awkwardly reconcilable to Pauline soteriology. For Paul, the fact that Christ was "born of woman" (Gal. 4:4) and "born in the likeness of human beings" (Phil. 2:6) matters salvifically because it enables Him to die in place of sinful humanity. But Paul avoids any further incarnational soteriology, whereby the birth of Jesus effects salvation from sin and death. If one understands 1 Timothy 2:15 as claiming that the incarnation itself achieves eternal salvation, even in part, one forces upon Pauline thought an apparent inconsistency. (If, however, 1 Timothy 2:15 implies a different kind of salvation, perhaps *dia tēs teknogonias* could refer to the birth of Christ. To this possibility we shall later return.)

No matter how we attempt to wriggle out of the problem, as long as we understand "she shall be saved through childbearing" as referring to a woman's eternal salvation from sin and death, we face what seems to be a glaring contradiction in Pauline teaching. Surely a contradiction so blatant as this could not have been intended by the author of 1 Timothy. 1 Timothy 2:15, therefore, begs for some alternate interpretation. Moreover, any sound exegesis should account for the odd change from singular "she shall be saved" to plural "if they remain."

Our search for the correct interpretation of this verse ought to begin with its historical and literary context. 1 Timothy purports to be a letter from Paul to Timothy who is struggling with various problems in Ephesus. In this city of Asia Minor, "certain persons . . . have wandered away into vain discussion, desiring to be teachers of the law without understanding" (1:6-7). These individuals have taught "different doctrines" and have occupied themselves with "myths and endless genealogies" (1:3-4). In sum, they have indulged in the "godless chatter and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge" (6:20). The descriptions of these false teachers and especially the mention of "what is falsely called knowledge" (*gnōsis*, 6:20), suggests that the opponents referred to in Timothy were gnostic teachers who had infiltrated the Ephesian community.

Numbered among these teachers, quite probably, were women. 1 Timothy 4:7 refers to the heretics' teachings as "profane and old-womanish myths" (*bebēlous kai graōdeis mythous*), thus hinting that these myths were propounded by women.

Furthermore, the prohibition against women teachers in 2:12 makes sense if women had been teaching falsely; otherwise it seems out of place. In fact, immediately prior to this prohibition, in 2:9-10, we find the desire that women "adorn themselves . . . as befits women who *profess religion*" (*epangellomenias theosebēian*). Finally, if the heretics of 1 Timothy were gnostics, women probably functioned as some of their teachers. Many ancient Christian writers, and most recently Elaine Pagels in *The Gnostic Gospels* (Random House, 1979, pp. 48-69), show that women performed all churchly roles within many Christian gnostic groups. Thus, we may reasonably conclude that women had been teaching heresy in Ephesus.

1 Timothy 2:11-15 encapsulates Paul's response to this problem. First, women are to learn "in silence with all submissiveness" (2:11). The fact that Ephesian women had fallen into vain discussions and speculations and were craving controversy and disputes precluded their learning. This desperate situation demanded their silence and subjection, without which learning would be impossible. Though the emphasis on silence and subjection seems overly patriarchal to modern readers, the fact that women are permitted and even encouraged to learn reveals the author's presumed optimism about female potentiality. Rather than excluding women entirely from religious education, as segments of first-century Judaism often did, Paul implies that women can and should learn alongside their male brethren.

Paul continues: "I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men: she is to keep silent" (2:12). Don Williams in his excellent book *The Apostle Paul and Women in the Church* (Regal Books, 1979, p. 112), argues that this verse need not have the implication of "I never permit. . . ." The Greek verb *epitrepō* might well be translated as "I am not permitting," with an emphasis on the temporary nature of the practice. Since at times Paul had allowed women to pray and prophesy, albeit with veiled heads (1 Cor. 11:5), Williams' observation appears valid. Only peculiar historical circumstances demand female silence.

The possible ephemerality of Paul's practice, however, appears to harden into permanence in the following verses, which explain the silence of women on the basis of Genesis 2 and 3: "For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor" (2:13-14). The prohibition against female teachers is grounded theologically in the most formative human events: the Creation and the Fall.

This argument, odd to modern ears, becomes especially sensible given the fact that many gnostics, perhaps those in Ephesus, overturned the Genesis account by glorifying Eve as the bringer of life and knowledge to man. If Paul were to silence the Ephesian female heretics, he would need to refute their use of Eve as a paradigmatic revealer of truth to man. Richard and Catherine Clark Kroeger, in "May Woman Teach? Heresy in the Pastoral Epistles" (*Reformed Journal* 30:10, Oct., 1980), argue convincingly that 1 Timothy 2:13-14 intentionally confutes gnostic claims regarding Eve.

Still, how Paul actually wishes to use 2:13-14, other than as an anti-gnostic polemic, is not altogether clear. On the one hand he could see these verses as premises which logically imply the silence of women. On the other, he might intend these statements as no more than illustrative: Adam's priority illustrates that of man in church, while Eve's deception portrays that of women in Ephesus. Whether Paul regards the events of Genesis as causative or illustrative of the current plight of woman, he certainly understands her to be saddled with a theological condition which prohibits her teaching in church. Only an amelioration of this female condition would enable woman properly to teach.

In this context we read "Yet she shall be saved through childbearing, if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with modesty" (2:15). We have already noted the difficulty in understanding the salvation connoted here as eternal salvation. Could, therefore, Paul have another kind of salvation in mind? Could this

salvation be one which is appropriate to the immediately preceding discussion? Could it be that woman will be saved from the very condition which demands her churchly silence?

Paul elsewhere uses the verb "to save" (*sōzō*) and its related words only in reference to salvation from sin and death. Yet the uniqueness of the phrase "she shall be saved through childbearing" suggests that the verb "to be saved" has a different sense here. In Hellenistic Greek *sōzō* had several non-theological connotations, evidence of which we find within the New Testament itself. In the Gospel of Mark, after healing the woman with the flow of blood, Jesus says, "Your faith has saved you" (*hē pistis sou sesōken se*, Mk. 5:34), using the verb *sōzō*. The KJV translates this with "Thy faith has made thee whole" and the RSV by "Your faith has made you well." In both cases the translation of *sōzō* implies an earthly non-eternal salvation: a restoration of a woman to health and wholeness. 1 Timothy 2:15 employs *sōzō* with such a meaning in mind. Woman will be saved through childbearing, not from death, but from the theological condition which outlaws her teaching. She shall be saved into ecclesiastical wholeness.

Why, we must ask, does childbearing achieve this sort of salvation? For an answer let us look to an analogous passage in 1 Corinthians 11. Here Paul argues for the veiling of women, partly on the basis of the created order in Genesis 2: "For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man" (1 Cor. 11:8-9). Man is prior to woman; woman is from, and therefore secondary to, man. Yet, after using this argument from creation, Paul shows another side of the issue: "Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God" (1 Cor. 11:11-12). Seen "in the Lord," that is, from a Christian point of view, men and women depend upon each other. The created order with man as source of woman is offset or balanced by the natural order with woman as the source of man. In the act of *childbearing* woman illustrates her natural, divinely ordained pre-eminence over man, even as man showed his pre-eminence over woman in creation.

Returning our attention to 1 Timothy 2, we notice that the claim "woman shall be saved through childbearing" follows an argument similar to 1 Corinthians 11:8-9, which emphasizes the priority of the male in creation. But 1 Timothy 2:15 clarifies what Paul leaves implicit in 1 Corinthians 11, namely that woman is actually saved from her subordinate condition in creation by bearing children. In the divinely established natural order, woman herself assumes a prior position to the man as his source. Whatever the ramifications of woman's being created second, these are cancelled through her giving birth.

Thus, if there exists a male-headed hierarchy in nature because God first created man, then equally there exists a female-headed hierarchy because God created woman to give birth. But in 1 Timothy 2, as in 1 Corinthians 11:11-12, Paul refuses to think in hierarchical terms. Rather, when seeing "in the Lord," Paul emphasizes not male-female hierarchy, but the interdependence of and reciprocity between the sexes. (In this regard we might recall Ephesians 5:21-33, in which Paul sets his discussion of marriage within the context of mutual submission of Christians.)

Paul has countered the import of Adam's prior creation by recognizing one of the theological ramifications of childbearing. Nevertheless, the significance of woman's deception in the Fall remains: "but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor." Might childbearing also enable woman to cleanse the stain of her being deceived by the serpent? An answer to this query lies within Genesis itself. Here, after the serpent deceives Eve and she falls, along with her husband, into transgression, God curses the serpent. He concludes His curse with:

I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel (Gen. 3:15).

The woman's seed, the product of her childbearing, will some day bruise the serpent's head. As the woman was deceived by the serpent, so she shall avenge herself through the seed which she bears.

Christian interpretation of Genesis 3:15 has understood the "seed" as a prophetic denotation of Christ. The second-century church father Irenaeus, for example, after quoting this text, explains that the One who conquers the Enemy must be born of woman, since Satan prevailed over man initially by means of a woman. This One, of course, is He who is born of the Virgin: Jesus Christ (*Against Heresies*, Book 5, Ch. 21). Since Paul might indeed envision the curse of Genesis 3:15 when he speaks of childbearing in 1 Timothy 2:15, conceivably he too connects the "seed" with Christ. Therefore, "she shall be saved through childbearing" could in fact refer to woman's bearing of the Messiah: the One who ultimately bruises the serpent's head.

An earlier objection, in this essay, to seeing "childbearing" as pointing to the birth of Christ was the apparent inconsistency between this gloss and Pauline soteriology. Once we read "she shall be saved through childbearing" as explaining an earthly restoration of woman and not her means of external salvation, the apparent inconsistency vanishes. Paul does not mean in 1 Timothy 2:15 that woman earns her salvation from sin and death by giving birth to the Messiah. Rather, through this special instance of childbearing, woman fulfills God's prophetic curse upon the serpent, thus exacting revenge upon Satan and being "saved" from the import of her deception and transgression.

Childbearing, therefore, serves two healing functions for woman. It both counterbalances man's prior creation and avenges woman's deception and transgression. Yet the fact that woman bears children does not suffice *by itself* to guarantee any woman's right to teach. Even if childbearing frees womankind from the theological effects of the Creation and Fall, the problem of false-teaching women in Ephesus and elsewhere remains. Thus Paul, always the pragmatist, makes the churchly restoration of women contingent upon their faith and action. Women will be saved "if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with modesty."

Paul uses the plural verb "*they continue*" (*meinōsin*) to emphasize that particular women, not womankind, must live appropriate Christian lives if they are to teach. Whereas *woman* shall be restored because *woman* bears children, specific *women* shall be restored only if *they themselves* act as Christians should. Any individual woman, therefore, need not bear children in order to teach in church. She owns the theological ramifications of childbearing simply by being female. But in order to be saved from her condition which prohibits her teaching, she must bear good works in faith, love, and holiness. In 1 Timothy the failure of Ephesian women to "continue in faith," not their femaleness, demands their silence. These women will be saved, thus permitted to teach, only if their thoughts and actions deserve this responsibility. Of course the same standard applies to any man as well.

The problem which we hoped to treat in this essay thus appears solved. We must understand "she shall be saved through childbearing if they continue . . ." not as an explanation of how a woman earns eternal salvation. Rather this statement constitutes Paul's theological response to his own argument for the silence of women — a silence which, although well-grounded theologically, he regards as temporary. In five short verses he has provided practical advice, defended this advice on theological grounds against gnostic speculations to the contrary, and presented conditions under which his advice would no longer be valid. Williams' translation of *epitrepō* as "I am not (now) permitting . . ." faithfully captures Paul's perspective. The prohibition against teaching will not permanently stifle woman: she shall be saved from whatever condition requires her temporary silence.

Paul's letter to Titus, closely related to 1 Timothy both theologically and historically, contains evidence for the temporariness of Paul's counsel against female teachers in this passage. Paul advises Titus, who is in Crete, to "Bid the older woman . . . to be

good teachers" (*kalodidaskalous*, 2:3). Whether their students include both sexes or not (2:4 might, though not necessarily, limit the students to "young women"), these Cretan women are permitted by Paul to teach. Undoubtedly then, he understands the silence demanded of women in 1 Timothy 2 as limited to the situation in Ephesus and in his own locale. Since the older women of Crete have already been "saved through childbearing" and have "remained in faith and love and holiness," they may teach. (Curiously, in writing to Titus [1:10-11] Paul even demands that trouble-making *men* be silenced.)

Having freshly interpreted Paul's intention in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 and observed the corroborating evidence from Titus, we might compose a paraphrase of this passage as follows:

Let a woman learn in silence with all submissiveness (not with loud disputes as some Ephesian women do). For the time being I am not permitting any woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet woman will be saved from that which demands her silence and will someday be able to teach. This is possible because through childbearing woman counterbalances the created priority of man and produces the "seed" which bruises the serpent's head, namely Jesus Christ. But woman will be restored only when individual women continue in faith and love and holiness, with modesty, thereby demonstrating the maturity of faith demanded of any Christian teacher.

Anyone who uses 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in order to prevent women from teaching in church misuses the text. Paul never intended his limitation of women as permanent. Indeed he hoped for and foresaw theologically the time when women would be saved from their churchly prohibitions. So today, if women fail to continue in faith and love and holiness, with modesty — like men who fail similarly — they should not teach. Ones like these, whether female or male, need to learn in silence and to practice what they learn. But if women have learned, if they have persevered in the Christian faith, if the Holy Spirit has gifted them for teaching, let us not quench the ministry of the Spirit through women because we have previously misunderstood what it means for woman to be saved through childbearing.

A fuller understanding of 1 Timothy 2:11-15 should speak not only to the church at large, but especially to those women who currently engage in or are preparing for Christian ministry. Verses which have so often functioned as a burden or stumbling block to women seeking to serve Christ now can offer their intended promise and challenge. The promise for women is that they shall be saved from whatever theological restrictions have been placed upon their free exercise of the Spirit's gifts. The challenge for women is to "continue in faith and love and holiness" in spite of the frustration and disappointment which attempting to serve the Lord in a trenchantly sexist church so often brings.

These verses also imply a challenge for men. We, who have for centuries suppressed the ministries of women, must now repent of our ways. We must confront our brethren with the truth that "in the Lord" women will be saved into ecclesiastical wholeness. We must encourage our sisters as they seek to serve Christ in His frighteningly patriarchal church. For if we all, male and female, support the Spirit's empowerment of women for ministry, perhaps she shall be saved!

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## INTERSECTION

*(The integration of theological studies with ethics, academic disciplines, and ecclesiastical institutions)*

### THE FINNEY FESTIVAL: PERSPECTIVES ON AMERICAN EVANGELICALISM

By Donald Dayton, Assistant Professor of Historical Theology at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Jeff Smith, student at Princeton Theological Seminary.

"The times, they are a'changing." This again became clear October 16–24, 1981 at the "Charles G. Finney Sesquicentennial Festival." It celebrated the 150th anniversary of the 1830–31 revivals that had great impact on Rochester, New York and represented a high point in the evangelistic ministry of Finney. The host seminary, Colgate Rochester-Bexley Hall-Crozier Divinity School, is located in the heart of the "burned-over district" (so called because the area was so often swept by "revival fires" early in the 19th century) but more recently has been known more as a center of liberal and social gospel commitments. There was then a certain irony in a "Finney Festival" convened in Rochester to celebrate the history and import of American evangelicalism.

The festival was a multi-faceted occasion, inaugurated with a full re-enactment of a Finney "revival meeting" in the Genesee County Museum (a reconstruction of a mid-19th century village of upstate New York). The climax was a series of "revival meetings" held in the churches in which Finney preached but with contemporary preachers and prophets: Jim Wallis of *Sojourners*, James Forbes of Union Seminary in New York, Peter Gomes of Harvard's chapel and Sister Joan Delaplaine of the Aquinas Institute of Theology. The scholarly core of the conference was, however, a series of papers on the history of American evangelicalism. Your reporters attended only this last component, held October 16–17.

The diversity and variety—even the ambiguity—of evangelicalism was the major motif. The foil of several papers was an interpretation of evangelicalism based too much on a Northeastern, Reformed, white, male, and post-fundamentalist viewpoint. Jon Butler of the University of Illinois, for example, used the Southern experience, where evangelical themes were bent to the support of slavery, to argue that evangelicalism was not always the carrier of the social reform and moral transformation of the Finney revivals. Al Raboteau of the University of California, however, probed the black evangelical experience to discover a revolutionary egalitarian impulse. Nathan Hatch of Notre Dame undermined more usual interpretations of millennialism by arguing that such themes did in fact on occasion combine with popular religion to produce a democratic and anti-elitist thrust. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg (University of Pennsylvania) and her student Nancy Hewitt (University of South Florida) used anthropological models to argue that revivalism contributed, at least at some points, to new power and roles for women. Henry Bowden found the mission of early Oberlin College to the Chippewa Indians more progressive and more identified with Native American interests than often assumed.

Two papers were devoted more directly to Finney and the Rochester revivals. Dean Garth Rosell of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary countered caricatures of revivalism as emotional excess by delineating the interplay of heart, mind and will in Finney's thought and practice. Paul Johnson of Yale University traced the impact of the Rochester revivals on the social structure of the city using statistical studies of shifts in sexual morality