

SERMON OUTLINE

FIRST TIMOTHY

'Faith and Order in the Church of God' - 5

1st Timothy 2 v9 - 16

This passage has aroused not a little debate and engendered not a little controversial disagreement in the church, therefore getting the context right is all important.

The general context

3 v14 - 15. God's instructions as to how the church is to be governed - administered and pastored.

The particular context

Key phrase (v10) - "who profess to worship God." The context (the background setting to what Paul has to say about the role of women in the church) is that of the gathering of the people of God on the Lord's day to worship God.

What does Paul (what does God) have to say about this?

1. HOW WOMEN ARE TO DRESS

Note - Paul is not speaking as a fashion guru!

A. THE ETERNAL PRINCIPLE

"I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety....." In other words, in coming to church to worship women (and men) should dress appropriately. What does this mean?

B. THE CULTURAL EXPRESSION

".....not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes....."

Note - This has nothing to do with women styling their hair, wearing jewellery, and putting on nice clothes, all of which the Bible approves! (See - Song of Solomon.) What these woman were wearing (who Paul was thinking of) was designed to draw attention to themselves.

(i) What they wore spoke of a luxurious lifestyle

Note - "expensive clothes" - 'Look at how rich I am!'

(ii) What they wore spoke of a licentious lifestyle

Note - "with decency and propriety" 'Look at how available I am!'

C. THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION

".....but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God." Note - the word "profess" means to convey a message. Is this what we're noticed for in the church - our good deeds, or is it because of what we wear?

'What Paul is emphasising is that Christian women should adorn themselves with clothing, hairstyles and jewellery which in their culture is inexpensive not extravagant, modest not vain, and chaste not suggestive.'

'The church should be a veritable beauty parlour, because it encourages its women to adorn themselves with good deeds.'

John Stott (Commentary on 1st Timothy)

2. HOW WOMEN ARE TO LEARN

Note (v11a) - they should learn. In Paul's day this was politically incorrect - women could be listeners, but not learners.

A. THE BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE

See v11 - 12. Note - the word "submission has nothing to do with any kind of superiority / inferiority. There is submission in the Trinity.

B. THE BIBLICAL REASON

The reason given here is not cultural, but biblical - in fact, it's doctrinal. See v13 - 14. This teaching is rooted and grounded in the doctrine of creation.

There are 2 things that we need to note concerning this divine prohibition to a woman preaching and exercising ruling authority over a man.

(i) This is not about superiority

Authority is not about status - it's about service.

(ii) This is not about suitability

There may very well be many women in the church who would make excellent elders - but this is not the point. The crux of this matter is fidelity to the word of God.

Paul was no chauvinist pig! See v15, and how we are all indebted to the humble service of one woman - Mary!