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The Role of Women in the Church:
A Study of 1 Corinthians 11:2-16, 14:34-35,
and 1 Timothy 2:8-15.

Presented to:
The Faculty of the Department of Biblical Studies
Asbury Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the
Masters of Arts in Biblical Studies

by
Ronald John Matar


Approved By: ____________________________

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction to the Problem

Women's rights have been highly emphasized during recent decades. The feminist movement of the twentieth century has deeply affected nearly every facet of American culture. Feminist campaigns seeking, not only equal value, but also equal roles with men permeate our society. Intense opposition comes from those who support a traditional patriarchal structure of family and society. Debate concerning these phenomena has necessarily entered into the church. Numerous studies concerning women's roles in the church and the home have been undertaken within Christian scholarship. Echoing the culture that encompasses scholarship, positions taken by scholars reflect the feminist viewpoint and the traditional patriarchal viewpoint.

The task at hand is to provide an unbiased analysis of the variegated material concerning women's roles in the church without imposing twentieth century categories upon the texts. This is needed because specific agendas, whether patriarchal or feminist, have impeded the analysis of the pertinent texts. Can anyone provide an unbiased analysis of the texts? This question must be answered with an affirmative response. Although the researcher's personal views can influence his or her work, it is this paper's contention that the ability to make a judgement based on objective data is feasible and does happen. The court systems of our country are built upon this premise, despite the fact that individuals can and do make judgements
based solely upon subjective determinants. Although one's results may cause his or hers' impartial work to be classified as either patriarchal or feminist, it should not indicate to the church the inability to achieve an unbiased analysis of the scriptures. If personal bias controls the study of the scriptures and determines each and every outcome of the meaning of the text, then the church is opening the door to total subjectivity in reading God's words. With this view of scriptural investigation, truth becomes relevant. The twentieth century Christian could be trapped in a world of cultural relativism and subjectivism.

This discussion of the search for godly principles does not lose sight of the fact that humans have a limited capacity for grasping the truths that do exist in the Bible. Sincere truth seekers can be biased and mistaken in the process of discerning the eternal truths through the study of God's word. Yet, the fact that humans do make mistakes does not mean that all interpretation of scripture performed by humans is doomed because of human limitations. If this were the case, then the personal relationship every individual has with God may be a matter of spiritual Russian roulette, where access to the true Creator of the Universe is dependent upon the choice one makes regarding who they choose to read the scriptures. The God you are in fellowship with is merely a biased figment of your imagination. There would be no absolute truth from God, but only relative truth as you understand your god to be.

The approach must always be one that attempts to discover the
true divine principles that do exist and are present within the text of the New and Old Testaments. In spite of the cultural factors that certainly influence the controversy over women's role's in society and church, God obviously has some positive type of input for this world. This presumption is evidenced by the fact that Paul did offer specific advice to the first centuries churches concerning the roles of women in the Christian church. From this realization Christians should take the positive approach to the study of this area.

The subject of women's roles in the church is certainly one that needs our attention. It is disheartening to think that the church is wasting valuable treasures by limiting the roles women can perform. Yet, at the same time, it is unwise to undermine the design God has for humanity because our enlightened society has determined that those designs are not sensible. For example, many adherents of the feminist movement choose to erase any distinctiveness between males and females, which opposes common sense. Are there roles that God would suggest for His people? The role of women in our culture is crucial. Therefore, we should be very diligent in discovering God's will for them in the here and now.

Statement of the Problem

What are the roles of women in the worship service of the church according to Paul, and how are these roles conditioned to the first century culture in which they were established? The pertinent scriptural texts are limited to 1 Corinthians 11:2-16, 14:34-35, and
1 Timothy 2:8-15. The analysis should evaluate the possible societal conditions that precipitated the admonitions Paul gave concerning women's roles in the Corinthian and Ephesian churches. The evidence that supports the presumed societal situation must be critiqued and evaluated according to its feasibility. The injunctions that Paul instituted should be analyzed using acceptable methods for biblical exegesis.

Justification of the Study

As noted in the introduction, there are numerous positions taken within scholarship concerning the roles of women in the church. The two extreme camps, namely the patriarchal (or complementarian) and the feminist, have produced many publications that defend their position in diverse ways, including biblical studies. Unfortunately, their ends have influenced their means. This does not discount all of their insights and findings, however. There have been significant insights uncovered through this process. The dilemma is that these insights are often couched in a biased theological framework that tends to force certain results and neglect others.

Scholarship is addressing the many theories that have developed in the debate over the role of women in the church, such as the interpolation theory. What remains is a look at the data in light of the criticisms that these theories have produced. Significant justification for discounting a recent theory (within the last 200 years) should indicate to the scholarly community that the theory
ought to remain dormant until data forces it back into the discussion. This has not been the case. A theory's justification has been tied to the results it brings, not to the principles of biblical exegesis. By incorporating societal factors that realize twentieth century awareness, biblical exegesis has taken a second-place position to hermeneutics.

**Review of Related Literature**

The role of women in the church usually involves the discussion of a few particular texts in the New Testament. Three of these texts specifically detail women's involvement in the first century church at Corinth and Ephesus. It is fascinating to notice the wealth of new interpretations and approaches to these scriptures that have developed in this century. The most interesting facet of this development is the fact that this phenomenon has shadowed the growth of the feminist movement. Therefore, the more recent opinions offered by scholars may require the investigator to be alert to the cultural bias that may surface in their way of reasoning.

The scriptures that have contributed to the subordination of women are the primary focus of this paper, limiting the investigation to 1 Corinthians and 1 Timothy.¹ These three scriptures have been used throughout the centuries to support the subordination of women within the church. However, in recent years, re-analysis of these passages has developed a host of new interpretations and hypotheses. Some have

dealt with the passage by removing it from the text, claiming it to be an interpolation. For example, W. Walker\textsuperscript{2} contends that 1 Cor. 11:2-16 is an interpolation. Since there is no manuscript evidence for this theory, very few scholars embrace it.\textsuperscript{3} Padgett takes the viewpoint that Paul is simply quoting the Corinthian stance before he corrects them.\textsuperscript{4} However, Carson has correctly challenged researchers concerning the tendency to attribute words to the Corinthians when they do not reflect their own particular views.\textsuperscript{5} Many do not question the authenticity of the passage, but have relegated it to that culture alone.\textsuperscript{6} At the same time, there are those who agree with its authenticity, and they contend that supra-cultural elements within its context have as much application today as in the first century.\textsuperscript{7} Needless to say, the presuppositions that a researcher brings to the


investigation can predetermine the direction that he or she will follow. It is this type of dynamic that confronts the analysis.

The investigation into 1 Cor. 11:2-16 leans heavily upon numerous works within scholarly circles. Ones that stand out are M. Black, T. Schreiner, and Witherington. Although these articles have varying degrees of agreement between them, their usefulness to the development of the analysis of this thesis was huge. Schreiner certainly would be considered a complementarian while Black's views, though neither complementarian nor egalitarian, result in opinions that are probably more beneficial to complementarians than egalitarians. Witherington certainly leans more toward the egalitarian side of issues, yet, in general, does not appear to let personal bias force certain scriptures to say things that are not naturally there. He, therefore, allows certain tensions to remain in the text, even though a biased conclusion would benefit an egalitarian reading.

The works that have most influenced the research into 1 Cor.

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11:34-35 are C. Osburn and Witherington. These two works, along with support from a host of supporting articles, seemed to best handle this text. Osburn would not necessarily be characterized in either of the two categories that have been referred to. His emphasis at reconstructing the actual situation facing the Corinthian church appears to be without bias, although this ideal is never perfectly achieved. Yet his analysis does not appear to force the scriptures into particular meanings that greatly benefit just one side of the issue.

The analysis of 1 Tim. 2:8-15 drew heavily upon the work of D. Moo, T. Geer, A. Kostenberger, Schreiner, and H. Baldwin. Moo is certainly a complementarian while Payne is egalitarian. Their interactions have generated much research, as well as quite a few sparks. Geer would not fall in either camp, choosing positions that benefit both sides of the debate. Kostenberger, Schreiner, and Baldwin, in their book on this scripture, set a cordial tone in


attempting to deal with these difficult issues without insulting those whom they opposed. Unfortunately, this manner of dealing with these issues is not the norm. Yet, the primary works used in this research usually avoided belittling the argument of their opponents quite well. Although this is not the crucial element that makes a piece of research valuable, it does reflect a spirit that desires interactive discussion based upon objective analysis of the data available. Their work reflects a high level of careful scholarship and is often referred to within this paper.

**Statement of Purpose**

The method used for this thesis is one of biblical studies, involving exegesis of the scriptures in order to determine what the scriptures said to the first century reader. This will inevitably involve the utilization of historical data to determine the setting of the text of 1 Corinthians. Exegesis should reflect the accepted methods and approaches utilized in scholarship. These accepted standards should be adhered to and when there is deviation, it should be noted.

The social context of the writings plays a major role in the determination of the meaning of these scriptures. Therefore, significant weight should be given to this information. However, the setting for these scriptures is not known with certainty, even though some approach this topic with such an attitude. The reasonable and theoretical social settings should be chronicled to indicate to the
scholarly community the basis for implied meanings in the text.

Finally, any results should be evaluated according to the theological implications that they may convey. This by necessity will require the study of other scriptures, and therefore this will be performed in only an introductory manner. In the final analysis, it is the theological, ethical, and practical implications that will aid modern humans the most in applying these scriptures to modern society.
CHAPTER 2

The Historical Context of the Corinthian Church

The city of Corinth is strategically located on a narrow isthmus that separates the Aegean Sea and Gulf of Corinth. Since the isthmus is only four and one-half miles wide, it was utilized by the shipping industry in order to avoid the long, dangerous journey south around Greece. Ships would unload their cargo on one side and reload on the other. Small ships could even be dragged across the isthmus on a paved road called the diolkos. The isthmus also connected the Peloponnese and the mainland of Greece, giving it even more thoroughfare traffic. This location allowed it to become one of the most prosperous cities in all of Greece. It flourished for several centuries as a Greek city-state. However, Corinth was destroyed by the Roman military in 146 B.C., led by consul Lucius Mummius. Some one hundred years later, in 44 B.C., Julius Caesar ordered the city be rebuilt as a Roman colony.

The redevelopment of Corinth probably benefitted the Romans in two ways. First, the city offered a certain revenue to Rome through the commerce that would inevitably develop. It had a natural water supply and a strategic location for commerce. It was also the location for the Isthmian games, which was second only to the Olympian games. These games were very popular and brought a large number of people to Corinth when the games were occurring. Second,

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Rome desired a site to allow its veterans, urban plebeians, freedmen, and freedwomen to colonize, since Rome was often overcrowded. Colonizing Corinth with residents of Rome helped alleviate potential economic and political problems that this group of people could create if they remained there. It also strengthened the ties Corinth would have with Rome.

Data indicates that there was a very strong effort to Romanize the city of Corinth in the first century A.D. The architecture, artifacts, and inscriptions from this period indicate a strong Italian presence there. Many of the buildings built during this era reflected the architecture of Italy. A considerable amount of Italian pottery and merchandise has been identified in Corinth, reflecting large quantities of imported goods to this city. The extremely large number of inscriptions found in this area also suggests a strong Roman presence, since “virtually all public inscriptions were in Latin.” Latin was the official language and the city was ruled by Roman law. The local government of Corinth was


primarily filled with Roman colonists and their descendants. During the reign of Nero, the public center was one of the largest and most attractive centers in Greece.\textsuperscript{22} With such a intensive Italian influence directed at this city, one would agree that "Roman Corinth was certainly never simply a 'Hellenistic' city."\textsuperscript{23}

Since this seaport city was so busy with trade and commerce from all parts of the world, it is no small wonder that it became a melting pot for different religions. The city was famous for the temple of Aphrodite, which was located on the Acrocorinth, a mountain overlooking the city. She was the goddess of love and fertility, and sacred prostitutes served her in the temple by practicing their profession with the men who ascended the Acrocorinth's steep slopes. These activities were part of the classical period of Corinth, but it is not certain whether they existed at the same level in Roman Corinth.\textsuperscript{24} There were, however, three temples of Aphrodite located within the temple precincts of the city.\textsuperscript{25}

It is clear that the Romans were very willing to synthesize the deities of other peoples into their own religious practices. This tendency was especially useful when a well-known deity was involved. The temple of Aphrodite offered such an opportunity, as the image of the temple found itself upon Roman coins, promoting the site and

\textsuperscript{22} Meeks, 47.
\textsuperscript{23} Witherington, \textit{Conflict & Community in Corinth}, 7.
\textsuperscript{25} Witherington, \textit{Conflict & Community in Corinth}, 13, n33.
encouraging solicitation.\textsuperscript{26} It is probable that Corinth retained its reputation as a center for sexual promiscuity. The term, *korinthiazestai*, penned by Aristophanes in the fifth century B.C., which literally meant 'to act like a Corinthian,' was generally known to imply the practice of fornication. It appears the Romans may have chosen to capitalize on her legacy.

Shrines devoted to Apollo, Asclepios, Athena, Demeter and Kore, Tyche, and Hera Argaea were among those present in Corinth\textsuperscript{27}, along with the worship of Isis and Sarapis, two Egyptian deities.\textsuperscript{28} The temple of Asclepios was an important sanctuary for the ill. This god claimed to be able to heal the physical, emotional, and mental health of its patrons. The temple of Apollo had a close relationship with the oracle at Delphi, which was only 50 km. from Corinth. Since Apollo was the god of prophecy, it is necessary to consider the possible effects this may have had upon the Corinthian Christians. Paul addresses problems related to prophecy and glossolalia in 1 Corinthians. The question concerning the relationship of the type of speech in which the women were engaged in 1 Corinthians 14:34 must be considered.

By establishing the fact that the city has a clear Roman presence, it is best to describe the city of Corinth as Greco-Roman

\textsuperscript{26} Witherington, *Conflict & Community in Corinth*, 13.


during the days of Paul's visits. The social climate incorporates both the Greek and Roman customs. The destruction of the city in 144 B.C., along with one hundred years of dormancy, had opened a window in time for a different culture to take root. The advent of time produced a much stronger Greek presence, though. Historical data indicates that Corinth became increasingly dominated by Greeks and their culture through the second century.  

What remains to be substantiated is the presence of a significant Jewish community. Only Acts 18 and Philo testify to the presence of the Jewish Diaspora in Corinth. Acts 18 states that Claudius commanded the Jews to leave Rome, with Aquila and Priscilla representing some of the Jews who went to Corinth. Philo singles out Argos and Corinth as two cities into which the Diaspora settled.  

Yet, evidence of a Jewish community is absent from all other ancient literature, as well as archaeological finds, with one notable exception. There is a fragment of what is probably a lintel from a doorway with the inscription [Synagôgê Hebr[aiô] 'Synagogue of the Hebrews' (probably post-first century A.D.). Although evidence of their presence is minimal, it is assumed that the Jews were present in Corinth in some sizable number. However, their impact on the

32. Witherington, Conflict & Community in Corinth, 25.
culture in Corinth is presumed to be slight. Yet, it is probably safe to assume that the church of Corinth would have felt a strong influence from this group, even if it was small in size, given the Jewish roots that Christianity had.
CHAPTER 3

1 Corinthians 11:2-16

This passage of scripture is laden with difficult problems for the interpreter. Yet the basic instruction within the passage is relatively clear, although some will even contest this. Paul instructs the women to cover their heads when they are praying or prophesying. He tells the men not to cover their heads when they pray or prophesy. This practice is recognized in all the churches of God. The trouble arises in trying to discern why Paul gave such an instruction. Although he goes to considerable length to convey his reasoning, contemporary scholarship can agree on very little in this section.

The context of this passage is one of corporate worship, which includes chapters 11 - 14. Paul begins this letter by addressing the conflicts involving the Corinthian Christians with a sermon on "wisdom." He then begins to respond to either an "official" letter from the Corinthians,\(^\text{34}\) or to a private correspondence from the household of Chloe.\(^\text{35}\) The phase \(\pi e \rho \iota \delta \xi\) (now concerning) appears to introduce his responses to the Corinthian inquiries.\(^\text{36}\) Interpersonal relationships and marriage are discussed in chapters 5 - 7, and the eating of food offered to idols is dealt with in chapters 8 - 11:1. Chapters 12 - 14 addresses the issue of spiritual gifts in the public worship setting,

\(^{34}\) 1 Cor. 7:1.

\(^{35}\) 1 Cor. 1:11.

\(^{36}\) 1 Cor. 7:1; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1.
while 16:1-4 deals with the collection of money for the church at Jerusalem.

In chapters 11 - 14, Paul deals with several problems the Corinthians are having in their public worship. The first problem pertains to the manner in which the men and women cover their heads during worship (vv. 11:2 - 16). Secondly, he corrects them in the way in which they conduct their remembrance of the Lord's supper (11:17 - 34). This section begins with Paul stating he cannot commend them in this matter, which draws a contrast to the previous section (11:2-16) where Paul does commend them. This section also returns to the theme he began in chapter 1, namely, that there are divisions and disunity among the body. Lastly, he spends three chapters teaching them about the proper use of the gifts of the Spirit, especially glossolalia, and the administration of the prophetic gifts. It is interesting to note that chapters 11 and 14 both address the use of prophecy in worship.

As noted previously, Paul begins verse 11:2 with a commendation for their remembrance of him in all their activities, and the manner in which they have kept the traditions. Yet he will continue on in the next fourteen verses to find fault with the example they have been setting, and he indicates that their practice contrasts with that of the traditions of the church. This has led some to speculate that this may be an interpolation.\(^{37}\) However, very few scholars hold

\(^{37}\) Walker, Jr., 94-110.
such a view since there is no manuscript support for it.\textsuperscript{38} What is more likely is that Paul desires to praise them about certain unidentified traditions before he crashes their party with stern directives and corrections for their worship activities. This is conceivably a kind of \textit{captatio benevolentiae}, or 'praise before scolding,' that will balance Paul's stern rebukes concerning their worship.\textsuperscript{39} It is very possible that this beginning statement may introduce the entire section on corporate worship.

Verse 3 is foundational to the entire discussion on headcoverings. It is also the verse that has fueled the engines for new and innovative approaches to interpreting this passage. The key that opened the door to these ideas is Paul's use of the word \textit{κεφαλή}. He uses the literal and metaphorical meaning of \textit{κεφαλή} throughout this section of scripture. Verse 3 utilizes the metaphorical meaning as he describes the relationship of God to Christ, Christ to man, and man to woman. Historically, this word has been translated as "having authority over" in verse 3. The historical understanding of the meaning of this word has drawn much challenge in recent years. S. Bedale questions the traditional translation of \textit{κεφαλή} by examining the Hebrew word \textit{שֵׁם}. He speculates that the meaning may well be "first" or "beginning of."

It seems a fair inference that St. Paul, when using \textit{κεφαλή} in any


\textsuperscript{39} Fee, \textit{The First Epistle to the Corinthians}, 500.
but its literal sense, would have in mind the enlarged and metaphorical uses of the term 'head' familiar to him from the Old Testament: and these, as we have seen, include the meaning of 'beginning' of something. Consequently, in St. Paul's usage, κεφαλή may very well approximate in meaning to ἀρχή.⁴⁰ (ἀρχή means 'beginning')

It is interesting to note that Bedale did not discard the concept of "authority" from the word κεφαλή, nor did he intend for this passage to be devoid of a hierarchical meaning. However, Scroggs and others have carried the argument further by not only interpreting the word to mean "source," but also claiming the word does not convey any hint of an hierarchical structure that arranges an order of men in authority over women.⁴¹

A common metaphorical use of κεφαλή, however, is to denote "source" and it is this meaning which fits verse 3. Christ is the source of man (the motif of Christ as creator) and man is the source of woman (Gen 2). I submit that it should be taken here in its ordinary Greek metaphorical meaning. Verse 3 is then a Christian midrash on Gen. 2 and does not assert male dominance.⁴²

Their claim is that Paul only wishes to have a clear differentiation between the two sexes.

In order to settle this issue, the possible metaphorical meanings must be determined. The arguments supporting κεφαλή as


meaning “source” have mainly used Bedale's work as evidence. Yet Bedale cites no texts from ancient Greek to support his theory. The accepted lexicon for New Testament studies does not list “source” as a possible definition, but it does list “ruler.” However, the classical Greek lexicon does cite “source” and “origin,” but does not cite “ruler.” Although those in favor of “source” have insisted it was the common definition, other scholars have sought out the source of these claims. The result of these studies have led Grudem and Fitzmyer to conclude that the incidences of “source” are very rare, whereas the occurrences of “authority over” is well documented. The writers of the New Testament era, such as Philo, usually meant “authority” when using κέφαλή. Grudem, by analyzing the occurrences of κέφαλή, has even drawn into question the few instances where “source” was supposedly the proper translation. Fitzmyer seems to have summed up the analysis quite well:


The next edition of the *Greek-English-Lexicon* of Liddell-Scott-Jones will have to provide a sub-category within the metaphorical uses of *κεφαλή* in the sense of 'leader, ruler.' Lastly, it should be clear that the 'head' as the leading part of the living body is not the anachronism that S. Bedale once thought it was. When Philo calls it the ruling part of the soul, he is not saying something that would be unintelligible to Paul of Tarsus.\(^{49}\)

What should be understood from the analysis above is that the translation "authority over" has the more natural meaning. If "source" is used as a translation, it certainly represents an unusual usage.

As in all cases of Greek words, the context determines the way a word is used. An indication that "one having authority over" is the intended meaning develops from the phrases "woman is the glory of man" (v. 7) and "woman was created for man" (v. 9). These two phrases provide support for the interpretation of *κεφαλή* as "authority over." It is also quite difficult to construe Paul's argument in verse 3 as meaning God is the "source" of Christ.\(^{50}\)

The resulting reading of verse 4 appears to express an hierarchical relationship between God, Christ, man, and woman. This is the point that many researchers resist. To conclude that Paul is speaking of subordination of woman to man is heresy in much of our society. Although the above analysis has not strained the text or made any major leaps of faith, the end result is viewed as incorrect by many because of what it means to them today. Therefore, increased effort is put forth to derail the analysis. What seems appropriate,

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\(^{49}\) Fitzmyer, "Another Look at ΚΕΦΑΛΗ," 511.

\(^{50}\) 1 Cor. 15:27-28 present a theology of God and Christ that does not fit a reading of *κεφαλή* as "source."
however, is that the egalitarians have the responsibility for the burden of proof concerning their reading. An argument must be put forward that can resist reasonable scrutiny without being suspect.

The subordination of women to men is not a teaching that garners respect in the mainstream of twentieth century America. The implications are intolerable for many women and men too. Therefore, the assumption is that the teaching must be an incorrect reading of the text or a culturally bound instruction. Biblical scholarship must reject the popular activity in America of revisionist history. In the realm of revisionist history in the United States, if the words and actions of an historical person conflict with the powers that be, then attempts are made by some to change what was said. Consequently, if this type of activity seeps into biblical studies, then the result is an undermining of the authority of God's Word over the lives of the scholar involved, and eventually, the student and many in the pews of the local church. Truth becomes subject to the views of the reader.

For many the problem with subordination is that it implies inferiority. Yet the concept of a woman being submissive to a man does not communicate inferiority from a New Testament perspective.\(^5\) Within the present passage, the interdependence of man and woman is stressed (vv. 7-9, 11-12). What is emphasized is the teaching that women are equal in being but different in function.\(^5\) However, this


is not an acceptable teaching to many egalitarians. Yet, some egalitarians, such as Stanley Grenz, are agreeing that this understanding is “technically correct,” albeit misapplied. R. Groothius, however, argues against this concept by utilizing her subjective logic to invalidate the meaning of Paul's teaching because it is an insult to her as a woman and to her concept of fairness.

The idea of spiritual authority as unearned and intrinsic to maleness logically entails the spiritual inferiority of women. Subordinating a woman solely by reason of her femaleness can be deemed fair and appropriate only if all females are, without exception, inferior to all males in their ability to perform the particular function for which they have been subordinated. If that function is the government of one's own life and the lives of others, then femaleness must consistently render a person less wise, less mature, less responsible, and less rational than those persons who are males.

Unlike female subordination, which is determined on the basis of a women's being, namely her female sexuality, functional subordination is determined on the basis of experience; roles and responsibilities are assigned and accepted according to the most efficient division of labor, and according to individuals' differing abilities to perform particular tasks. Because functional subordination ... is limited in scope to the specific function that is at issue, and is limited in duration to the time it takes for the function to be accomplished or for the subordinated per to "outgrow" his limitations. Such a subordination is radically different from that of a traditionalist woman, whose subordination to her husband's authority comprehensively covers all her activities, and endures throughout all her life. She never outgrows it; it never ends.


55. Ibid, p. 53.

56. Ibid, p. 63.
Couple this with the fact that Groothius describes the functions pertaining to the male as "higher-status" and "superior" positions\(^57\) that are worth more in the sight of God, and one becomes concerned that she merely desires to occupy the roles that men traditionally occupied. What may be amiss is the fundamental teaching and example of the Lord who expressed the servant mindset by not seeking fairness with respect to the equality of being ("equal with God"), but humbled himself in order to receive the praise of God.\(^58\)

Some discussion has transpired concerning whether ἀνήρ and γυνὴ should be translated "man" and "woman" or "husband" and "wife". Later in the letter, Paul uses these terms to refer to husband and wives (1 Cor. 14:34-5). The context does not clearly suggest that Paul has the marriage relationship in mind. When these two terms are meant to represent the marriage relationship, the context necessitates such an interpretation, so much so that "such passages are not even debated with respect to this issue."\(^59\) However, to translate ἀνήρ and γυνὴ as husband and wife in this context leads to confusion. Christ becomes the head of every husband, the wife is born of the husband, and the husband is born of the wife.\(^60\) The Old Testament text referenced by this passage is Genesis 2:21-23 does not refer to Adam and Eve as

\(^{57}\) Ibid, pp. 46, 53.

\(^{58}\) Phil. 2:5-11; also 1 Cor. 10:24.


\(^{60}\) Black, 199-200.
married, but as "man and woman." The more general rendering is to be preferred. 

The next issue that needs significant attention is the type of headcovering discussed in this passage. There are a multitude of variables that require consideration. Does the headcovering refer to hair worn loosely, or does it refer to a veil or shawl? How does the presence of three different ethnic groups within the church in Corinth affect the meaning of this charge? Is there a cultural phenomenon present that explains Paul's instruction in some manner? The answers to these questions can help filter out many incorrect readings of this text.

The type of headcovering Paul is referring to is certainly a material covering of the head, such as a shawl or mantle. Many who have examined this scripture have discussed the possibility that Paul was referencing hair or hairstyles. However, Witherington seems to have applied the best analysis, which also seems to be the most straightforward.

Paul's discussion of hair (vv. 14f.) is brought in toward the end of a supporting argument, as one example of a kind of headcovering. This means that the discussions by Murphy-O'Connor, Hurley, Padgett, and others of hair and hairstyles are quite

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62. Witherington, Women in the Earliest Churches, 85. Also see pages 69-71 for additional discussion.

beside the point. The issue is headcoverings.\(^6^4\)

The term for veil (κάλυμμα) is not found in this section of scripture. Paul uses this term in 2 Corinthians 3:13-16 when he speaks of Moses covering his face with a veil because it shone too bright for the Israelites to view. The word used here is περιβολαίου, which does not appear to mean veil. This word refers to a mantle or cloak which does not cover the face, but drapes over the head, similar to the manner in which hair covers the head. The Latin term for this way of wearing the shawl is capite velato. This fits the context better than veil, which does cover the face, unlike the way hair covers the head.\(^6^5\) It also makes the phrase κατὰ κεφαλῆς ἔχων, which means "having down the head," make sense.

The next question is certainly more complex than the previous one. It has been established that Romans, Greeks, and Jews are present in Corinth, and therefore have access to the church. The epistle implies that there were Jewish Christians among the assembly.\(^6^6\) Paul grew up in Tarsus where headcoverings were the norm for females.\(^6^7\) His special training as a Pharisee took place in Jerusalem. Therefore, it is safe to assume he was well educated in the customs of the Jewish people, and was therefore familiar with the

\(^{64}\) Witherington, Conflict & Community in Corinth, 232. Also Witherington, Women in the Earliest Churches, 82-3.


\(^{66}\) 1 Cor. 9:20, 10:32. Also, Acts 18:2f.

\(^{67}\) Dio Chrysostom, Discourses, 33.48-49.
practice of women covering their heads. It is equally safe to expect Paul not to offend or estrange either the Jewish Christians or the Gentile Christians unnecessarily. The proper names in this epistle indicate that both Romans and Greeks were members of the assembly. Therefore, Paul's admonition must not only be acceptable to a converted Jew, but also be palatable to the Gentiles.

The differences between the way the three cultures wore headcoverings are significant in certain situations. Yet, due to the manner in which Paul instructs the Corinthians, it may be that the wearing of headcoverings by women had some commonality among all three cultures. Galt has shown that adult Greek women wore a headcovering during rituals, religious festivals, and dances. Plutarch cites the custom of Roman women wearing a headcovering while the men went without a one in public. Plutarch also indicates that men and women wore headcovering at religious festivals, with the exception of the honos sacrifice. Recognizing the fact that the Jewish women also covered their heads, it seems evident that all three cultures practiced the custom of women covering their heads in both the marketplace and in religious contexts. Again, Witherington summarizes the evidence well:

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69. Galt, 373-93.

70. Plutarch, Roman Questions 267a, LCL (1936) 4: 27.
It seems sufficient to show that the wearing of a headcovering by an adult woman in public (especially in a ritual context) was a traditional practice known to the Jews, Greeks, and Romans. This may be contrasted with the evidence that girls, maidens, harlots, and immoral wives were expected to be bareheaded in various contexts. The Roman and Corinthian evidence is important to show that Paul was not likely to impose any alien or unique Jewish customs on the ethnically mixed group in Corinth (cf. Gal. 2:14). He may have endorsed a traditional Greek and Corinthian practice that he found theologically significant and useful.\(^1\)

There were some nuances to the sacrificial practices of the Romans that merit consideration. R. E. Oster has stressed the Roman cultural norms over against the Greeks. He cautions that the Roman influence upon the Greco-Roman city must be seriously considered. The interrelationships of these two cultures is probably indicative of some of the problems that arose within the church.

The Greek's self-identity arose most from their speech and education, while a Roman often distinguished himself by what he wore. It was not that Greeks eschewed head apparel. Rather it was clear to them and Romans that the habitual propensity of Romans to wear head apparel in liturgical settings stood in sharp contrast to the practice of others.\(^2\)

Coupled with this is the assertion that Romans wore headcoverings as an act of reverence to the gods.\(^3\) Some consider the act of Roman men wearing headcoverings a sign of social rank.\(^4\) It should be noted that

\(^{1}\) Witherington, *Women in the Earliest Churches*, 82.


\(^{4}\) David W.J. Gill, "The Importance of Roman Portraiture for Headcoverings in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16," *Tyndale Bulletin* 41
Paul appeals to the Corinthians earlier in the letter as a group not endowed with great social or economic standing (vv.1:26-7). The next section (vv. 17-34) attends to the problems caused during the remembrance of the Lord's supper by some (considered to be wealthy) who were eating and drinking while the rest of the church went hungry. Gill suggests the inconsiderate display of wealth and privilege is the reason Paul instructed the men not to wear headcoverings.\(^{75}\) If some practice arose amid the Corinthian church that disregarded accepted acts of appropriateness for their culture as it related to God, then Paul's words certainly are germane. The attitude and intent of the worshiper is certainly primary in Paul's teaching.

Oster insists that Paul's instruction concerning the proper headcovering for men carries as much force and concern as the instruction he gave for women. This, however, seems forced upon the text. Although the text does provide instruction for the man, it does not appear to be the reason for the instruction. M. C. Black\(^{76}\) has offered three good reasons to reject this opinion. First, Paul invests much more interest in the manner in which women cover their head than men. With respect to those verses that address attire, he uses only 39 words regarding the men's headcovering and 103 for the women. Second, Black observes that one statement (v. 13) has no

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\(^{75}\) Gill, 246-51.

\(^{76}\) Black, 195.
"Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a woman pray to God uncovered?" He suggests this "may well express the point of the whole." Third, it is not necessary to assume Paul's concern is also for men merely because they enter into the discussion. What may be more true is that their part in the discussion was to bring the focus sharply upon the women's actions. As Black notes, "the woman's failure to wear headcoverings was inappropriate because it violated the distinction between men and women, which is at the heart of the passage." Although men's headcovering does not appear to be Paul's main concern, it does not negate the instruction Paul gave to the men.

The next term that requires explanation is that of "praying and prophesying." Praying is discussed at length in chapter 14, and in the context of the use of the gifts of the spirit by the Corinthians. In 14:14, the praying mentioned refers to that of speaking in tongues. Speaking in tongues is unintelligible utterances spoken to God, and not to humans (14:2). Since they are not understood by the listeners, they do not edify the church, but only the speaker. Prophecy, however, is speech which is understood by the church and, therefore, edifies both the speaker and the hearers. It is the greater gift (14:5), as Paul expresses in 14:18-19:

"I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you; nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind, in order to instruct others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue."

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77. Ibid, p. 195.
78. Ibid, p. 195.
Prayer may be considered, in this context, a more personal gift, whereas prophecy is intended for public edification. Given this fact, along with the instruction for women to pray and prophesy with headcoverings, one must accept the fact that women were authorized to speak during the worship service. In fact, at the end of this section of scripture, Paul admonishes them to "be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues; but all things should be done decently and in order."^79

In verse 4, Paul "begins to set up the argument with the women"^80 by informing the men that praying and prophesying with a headcovering brings shame upon Christ. The reason for this injunction may be related to some of the cultural norms that were discussed, but we cannot know for sure. But whatever it did involve, it brought shame (κατασχώμε) to the man's (metaphorical) head, who is Christ. It is reasonable to assume that there was something important involved in this issue. This fact alone encourages the church to continue to investigate this topic, and hopefully discover the item that caused the injunction, and therefore better learn the mind of Christ through Paul.

Verse 5 begins with ἀλλ', which has been translated as "but" by the RSV and NASB, "on the contrary" by the NEB, and "and" by the NIV. A contrast seems to fit the context best, and so "but" provides the

^79. 1 Cor. 14:39-40.

^80. Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 505.
better reading. If the woman prays or prophesies with an uncovered head, she brings shame upon "the man," which probably refers to males. Paul reasons with the women that her actions make her "one and the same thing as having her head shaved," which means it makes her like a judged prostitute. Verse 6 creates conditions to drive home his point. If she does not choose to cover her head, then she may as well cut her hair. But if cutting or shaving the head is disgraceful, she should simply wear a headcovering.

One issue that verses 5-6 raises is whether the phrases "dishonors his head" and "dishonors her head" refer to disgracing themselves or disgracing the head (namely, "his head" referring to "Christ" and "her head" referring to "man") just alluded to in verse 3. Some reasons for interpreting it as disgracing one's own head include the fact that verses 14-5 explain how nature teaches that the way men and women wear their hair can bring disgrace upon them (κεφαλή is not used in verses 14-5). Also, if the context is appropriate it can clearly refer to one's own head, as in Acts 18:6 where Paul says, "Your blood be on your own heads."

There are several reasons to choose the reading of disgracing one's figurative head, who is "Christ" for the man and "man" for the woman. One obvious reason is that verse 3 just described "Christ" as the "head" of man and "man" as the "head" of woman. Therefore, verses 4-6 draw from verse 3 to reason that a man should not cover his head and thereby dishonor Christ, and a woman should not uncover her head

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81. Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 508.
and dishonor man. Also, the context strongly suggests that Paul is developing an argument based upon the principle in verse 3. In order to separate the metaphorical sense he has created with κεφαλή in verse 3, he could have used a reflexive pronoun to clearly say that they disgrace themselves. Finally, verse 7 continues to refer to the metaphorical sense Paul has developed in verse 3. What may be most appropriate here is that both senses are meant at the same time.

Paul continues in verses 7-12 by supporting his reasoning for the woman to pray or prophesy with a headcovering. The English versions do not translate μὴν ... ὅε in verse 7, which indicates the writer is clearly drawing a contrast. Paul's argument establishes that man is God's "image" (eiκὼν) and "glory" (δόξα), with the contrast being that woman is man's "glory" (δόξα). Yet Gen. 1:26-27 teaches that man and woman are made in the image of God. A. C. Wire argues that Paul intentionally modified the teaching to deter Corinthian women prophets who may have claimed to "already embody God's image in Christ." Does Paul not believe that woman is made in the image of God? The real question to ask is what is Paul's point in this rhetoric. The emphasis in this verse is not on "image" (eiκὼν) but on "glory" (δόξα). Verse 8 explains that woman is the "glory" of man.

82 Schreiner, "Head Coverings, Prophecies and the Trinity: 1 Corinthians 11:2-16," 131-2.


because she came "out of" (ἐκ) man. Man did not come out of woman. Man was not made "for the sake of" (ὄφοι plus the accusative) woman, but woman was made "for the sake of" man. The fact that man is the origin of woman and woman was created for man supports the central idea of woman being the "glory" of man.\(^{85}\) Woman being made in the image of God was not part of Paul's focus.

Paul's argument is based on Genesis 1-2, not chapter 3 which covers the fall. The distinctions between man and woman are part of the order of creation, not necessarily resulting from the fall. Paul also argues for a distinctiveness in roles based upon the order of creation. His concern for the different attire which men and women wear when they pray and prophesy is rooted in the order in which God created them. This difference in men and women had some effect upon the roles they had in Paul's first century world.

Perhaps the most difficult verse to deal with is verse 10. Traditionally, the interpretation of ἐξουσία, which is a key word in this verse, has been in harmony with the previous verses. This encourages a meaning of "authority." To translate the verse as "a symbol of authority on her head" made a reference to the headcovering from the previous verses, and, consequently, conveyed the idea that it was by the husband's authority that the woman could speak. Needless to say, this understanding has been seriously questioned in recent years.

One of the more interesting readings comes from Hooker, who

\(^{85}\) The idea that woman is subordinate to man flows easily from this portion of the text.
suggests that the traditionalist reading is not likely, if not impossible. Hooker suggests that man's uncovered head reflects the glory of Christ (his "head"), and woman's uncovered head reflects the glory of man (her "head"). The headcovering prevents the woman from reflecting man's glory in worship. The intent, then, in verse 10 is not that the headcovering represents man's authority, but that the woman has now been given authority independently to pray and prophesy.

This analysis seeks to rectify an assumed problem with the translation of this verse in most Bibles. The difficulty arises with the "passive" reading of "authority" in this verse, which makes the text say that woman should have a "sign" or "symbol" of authority on her head, namely a headcovering. Yet Hooker asserts that "authority" is always used in an "active" sense in 1 Corinthians, so as to communicate someone's "active" right and authority to do something (in this case prophesy), as opposed to some "passive" authority (namely, the man) making that decision. Therefore, this verse is teaching that the wearing of a headcovering allows woman the right to prophesy. Hence, the headcovering does not represent her subordination to the man's authority.

Hooker's rendering of this text creates a host of difficulties. First, the structure of this text suggest a parallel framework or

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86. Morna D. Hooker, 410-416.
87. Ibid.
possibly a chiasm. The pattern places the phrase "cover his head" (v. 7) in a parallel relationship with "to have authority on her head" (v. 10).

   a   (7) For a man indeed ought (ὁφείλει) not to cover his head
   b   since he is the image and glory of God;
   b'  but woman is the glory of man.
   (8) For man is not from woman, but woman from man.
   (9) Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man.
   a'  (10) For this reason the woman ought (ὁφείλει) to have
        authority on her head, because of the angels.

Verses 8-9 create a "parenthesis and support the commands in both
verse 7 and verse 10." Verse 7 states that man "ought not" to wear
a covering on his head, and verse 10 states that a woman "ought" to
"have authority" on her head. One would expect the phrase "cover her
head" in place of "authority on her head." As Black notes, "Paul has
intentionally substituted the metonymn 'authority' for the expected
reference to a headcovering." This structure appears to link the
idea of "authority" with the outward symbol of a headcovering.

The chiastic structure influences the way διὰ τούτο (for this
reason) is translated. Generally, this phrase is thought to look back
to verses 8-9. However, this structure indicates the phrase probably

88. Schreiner, "Head Coverings, Prophecies and the Trinity: 1
Corinthians 11:2-16," 134; Black, 209-10.

89. Ibid.


91. Witherington, Women in the Earliest Churches, 87; διὰ τούτο
usually points forward (Rom. 4:16, 5:12, 13:6; 1Cor. 4:17; 2 Cor.
4:1, 13:10; Phlm. 15; and 1 Thess 3:5,7). "This case is most
naturally taken as referring backward—because of the origin and
purpose of a woman's creation, she ought to wear a head-covering."
refers back to verse 7, with verses 8-9 supporting the argument. Therefore ὅτατο indicates that verse 7 explains why a woman should have a sign of authority on her head. Verse 7, along with the supporting verses 8-9, reveals that woman came from man and was created for man. Therefore, the underlying principle that supports woman having ἑυσώλαχ on her head (as opposed to a headcovering) is the order of creation. The concept of roles existing in our relationships was introduced in verse 3, where “man is the head (κεφαλῆ) of a woman,” and it continues to impact this passage. Verses 7-9 qualify verse 10 by explaining that the appropriate relationship for a woman to have with a man is in a subordinate role (with this reasoning based on creation).

Paul wants women to wear a headcovering in order to distinguish themselves from men. This distinction removes any confusion that may have occurred in Corinth. The headcovering, in this context, is a “symbol” of authority upon her head. The women may pray and prophesy as long as they realize they are subordinate to the authority of the man. This reflects the order of creation and is consistent with the flow of thought in the passage. However, it is not a popular result in the context of 1990's America.

Other reasons to reject Hooker’s view include the fact that this text has already taught that an uncovered woman praying or prophesying brought “dishonor” upon the man. Hooker has the text

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92. The context of this passage seems to prefer this reading for verses 4-6, although dishonoring one's own head is technically possible. See above for discussion.
stating that the uncovered head of a woman reflects the "glory" of the man. This deduction is not consistent with the text, and it is not necessary to carry Paul's analysis further than he has intended, especially if it contradicts what he has already made clear. Verse 11 makes sense if the reading implies that woman is subject to the man. Paul begins with the adversative "nevertheless" (παρ' ὅστις), as a precaution to derail some who may think that women are somehow "inferior" to men. This verse affirms woman by explaining that men are not independent of woman, in fact, men are born from women. This does not make sense if Paul has just elevated women's authority to an unprecedented level. Lastly, some have established that for Χρυσάνθη to have a meaning of a "symbol of authority" is a viable possibility.\textsuperscript{93}

The phrase "because of the angels" has created numerous analyses. The first views this to refer to evil angels, creating a need for headcoverings to protect against their lustful looks.\textsuperscript{94} A second idea is based on 1 Cor. 6:3, where Paul says that the saints will judge the angels. If they will judge angels someday, then it is a small thing for the women to exercise authority over their heads concerning these minor issues today. This is supported by many who believe that women's uncovered head is a reflection of man's glory since it

\textsuperscript{93} See Schreiner, "Head Coverings, Prophecies and the Trinity: 1 Corinthians 11:2-16," 135.

approves of their authority.  

A third view is based on several scriptures that describe angels as watching the created order. This view says that angels are the guardians of the created order, and possibly enforcers of proper order in worship. Jewish literature, along with evidence from Qumran, suggest that angels were present at worship. Some have contended that Paul links angels with principalities and powers that rule the world. Galatians 3:19 suggests that angels are involved in giving the law. Although one cannot be certain of the exact truth here, the last option seems to fit the context best, as well as reflect the ideas that were relevant in Paul's day.

As mentioned above, Paul anticipates that some may misinterpret his teaching on the subordination of women to men. Therefore, in verses 11-12, he attempts to prevent a man from believing that he is more important than a woman. If a man thought he could boast because he is superior to woman, Paul tells him to think again. One's boast should be in God who made all things.

The phrase "in the Lord" probably refers to the creation order. This phrase parallels "all things are from God." The nature of the communication in verses 11-12 is not to invalidate the previous argument Paul has established. Instead, he attempts to counterbalance

95. See Black, 211.
96. 1 Cor. 4:9; 1 Tim. 5:21; and Rev. 1:20.
97. The Old Testament also suggests this, e.g., Ps. 138:1.
the teaching with the necessary claim that man and woman are of equal value before the Lord. To affirm the fact that man and woman are of equal value before God does not nullify the gender distinctions that Paul has explained, based on the order of creation.

Paul now appeals to nature in order to further corroborate his argument. The general accepted custom at that time was for men to wear short hair and women long. Paul appeals to their sense of shame and glory in order to punctuate his argument. Verse 13 asks the rhetorical question that verses 14-15 answer: it is to your shame to not honor the role you have. It is worthwhile to notice that women's long hair functions in much the same way as the shawl which has been in the center of this discussion. Paul may be subtly anchoring his message in practices that the people cannot easily disagree with.

Paul warns those who want to be "contentious" that there is no such practice of men praying and prophesying with a covered head, and women praying and prophesying with an uncovered head in "the churches of God." By appealing to those who would challenge his teaching, Paul concludes this segment with an appeal to them to recognize the acceptable practices of "the churches of God." This certainly appears to mean the churches throughout the known world. The practice had a universal following.

This analysis concludes that, in this scripture, Paul describes

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100. Thompson, 104.
a hierarchy of roles that places the woman in an subordinate role under the leadership of man. In saying this, though, readers must be careful not to assume this affirms the patriarchal stance without qualification. The application of this reading to present day culture is another issue all together. Yet, this manner of reading the text appears to do justice to the great majority of the passage, with some difficulties that can not be fully eliminated due to limited knowledge about the first century circumstances and word meanings. Although complete certainty with regard to its meaning is not necessarily an option, the other options that have developed recently do not reduce the uncertainty in this passage, but increase it. The traditional reading has a more natural flow to the text. The issue of headcoverings attempts to bring distinction between the roles of men and women in the church setting. The concept of subordination appears to be attached to the discussion of headcovering. Women are assumed to be participants in the worship service through prayer and prophecy, with their subordination to men reflected in their headcovering. This appears to be the practice of all the churches that Paul is ministering to.
CHAPTER 4

1 Corinthians 14:34-35

The first question that must be addressed concerns the extent of the pericope that should be evaluated. The letter of 1 Corinthians was written by Paul to address specific problems that were surfacing in the church located there. The first sections of the book deal with issues of wisdom and its relationship to the people and activities that are present in Corinth. Marital propriety and interpersonal relationships are dealt within chapters 5-7, and the subject of food offered to idols is addressed in chapters 8-11:1. The topic of corporate worship is handled in 11:2-14:40. Within this section on worship, proper coverings for worshipers are discussed in 11:2-16 and the abuses of the Lord's supper is detailed in 11:17-34. Finally, the subject of the manifestations of the Spirit and the corresponding disorderliness in their worship is analyzed in chapters 12-14.

Paul directed the Corinthians toward proper use of prophecy and speaking in tongues in 12-14:25. His reasoning emphasizes the cognitive aspect of spiritual gifts in Christian worship, instead of the experiential ones. Therefore, prophecy is to be more desired since it produces understanding, especially in strangers attending the worship. The section containing verses 14:26-40 begin with Paul asking the question Τί οὖν ἐστιν, ἀδελφοί. It is best translated "How stands the case, brothers?" He then describes the various things that the Corinthians offered in worship, namely, "a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation." These
gifts represent the items of discussion over the last two chapters, gifts that the Corinthians are abusing as they employ them. The response to the question does not appear to be a positive one. The case is not good for the Corinthians.

The theme of this concluding section is given in the last part of verse 26, which states “all of these things must be done for the edification of the church.” The disorder and confusion that previously embodied the Corinthian worship must be harnessed in order to bring instruction and guidance to the entire assembly. The admonition is to be applied to the issue of tongues (v. 27), prophecy (v. 29), and women (v. 34). With respect to both tongues and prophecies, Paul mentions the problem of more than one speaker having something to give to the assembly. Paul directs them to share one at a time. The one speaking in a tongue does so only if an interpreter is present. If an interpreter is not present, the speaker should σιγάω, that is, be silent. The one prophesying should σιγάω if a revelation comes to someone sitting down, deferring to the Spirit who acts within the worship activities. The reasoning for this is that “God is not a God of disorder but of peace.”

The text that deals with women in the church begins either at verse 33b or at verse 34. The problem involves the phrase “as in all the congregations of the saints.” The duplication of the phrase “in the churches” occurs when 33b and 34 are combined, yielding a wording that many feel does not flow very well. Many position the phrase at the end of the previous section on prophesying. It should be noted that the phrase was never transposed with verses 33-34. Also, Paul
concluded his discussion on proper head coverings in 11:2-16 with, "If anyone is disposed to be contentious, we recognize no other practice, nor do the churches of God." The summary nature of the verse is certainly recognized in this context. Keeping the phrase with 33a stresses the need for self-control and common courtesy, as this applies to the churches everywhere. It seems most appropriate to keep the phrase with the previous section.

The extent of the pericope is probably verse 34-35. The unit was always transposed together in the Western manuscripts. These two verses specifically deal with the issue of women speaking in worship. However, a recent theory, one that is becoming more popular, proposes that Paul is quoting church members who are adopting a Jewish worship model. The reasoning is based on several planks, which include Paul quoting the Corinthians in other sections of the letter, the unique reference to the "law," the disjunctive particle in verse 36, the masculine noninclusive language in verse 36, and the similarity of the admonition with some Jewish literature. Many commentators reject this theory, such as Fee. D.A. Carson offers some good advice concerning this direction in exegesis:

During the last decade and a half, one notable trend in Corinthian studies has been to postulate that Paul is quoting the Corinthians in more and more places - usually in places where the commentator does not like what Paul is saying!

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102. Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 705.
The argument for this proposed theory is still not conclusive, and, therefore, the pericope will be verses 34 and 35.

Our text begins with the admonition for women to συγάτωσαι in the assembly. This word was used with the two previous issues, speaking in tongues and prophesying. There were no gender specific directives in those circumstances, and therefore the admonition to be silent most certainly applied to men. However, in this situation, the women are the focus of Paul's appeal. The question arises whether γυναίκις refers to females or to married women. The reasons for assuming that only married women are concerned here is that the women are instructed in verse 35 to "ask their own husbands at home." However, the text may be translated "their own man," meaning they should consult the man over their household. It seems more probable, though, that Paul meant married women in this context.\textsuperscript{104} However, there is no reason to think that the verse can not apply to women in general, while the reference to men specifically means the man in charge of the home.

The point of the admonition is for the women to be silent. The decree is substantiated by the clause introduced with γάρ, meaning "for." The validation for Paul's directive comes from his claim that the women "are not permitted to speak, but they should be subordinate." The question that immediately comes to mind is how can the women prophesy and pray during the worship, as described in 11:2-16, and obey Paul's directions here? What type of speech have these

\footnote{104. Witherington, \textit{Women in the Earliest Churches}, 101.}
women engaged in that has caused such a response from Paul?

The word translated "to speak" is ἔλαλε. This verb always takes its meaning from the context.\(^{105}\) In 14:23, 27, 28 it refers to "speaking in tongues." In 14:19, it refers to speech that is coherent. However, in this instance, there is some uncertainty as to what is meant. A grammatical investigation may provide some clues. When the mood is not indicative, the present tense does not necessarily indicate the present, nor does the aorist necessarily refer to the past. The present infinitive, which is the mood and tense in 14:34 and 35, refers to a continuing action or one that is repetitious in some manner.\(^{106}\) This may imply that the constant speaking up by the women created disorder and chaos in the worship. Other scholars have postulated that the "speaking" referred to any form of speech in worship,\(^{107}\) exerting authority over men,\(^{108}\) judging the prophets,\(^{109}\) or "sacred cries" in pagan worship.\(^{110}\)

\(^{105}\) Osburn, "The Interpretation of 1 Cor. 14:34-35," 233.


\(^{107}\) F. W. Grosheide, \textit{The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians} (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1953), 343.


Several other factors may be beneficial in identifying the type of speech that is being considered. The women are instructed to be in submission (ὑποτασσόμεθα). The question is to whom are they to be in submission? The husbands of the women are the obvious choice since they are specifically mentioned in the next verse. However, the text does not say to submit to your own husbands. Instead, the absolute form of the word is used, and it is best rendered "subordinate oneself."\(^{111}\) The women may have been called to be submissive to the church officials who were attempting to conduct an orderly worship. However, church officials are not mentioned in this text at all.\(^{112}\)

The most plausible rendering, one that takes into account the context, seems to call the women to submit themselves to the larger need of the assembly.

The larger context of the passage makes it more than reasonable to suppose that the women are to be in submission in a general way: to the cause of the good functioning of the Christian assembly. As speakers in tongues are to control the expression of their gift for the good of all (vv. 27-28) and the prophets are to submit (ὑποτασσομαι) the spirits of prophecy for the sake of peace and order in the assembly (v. 32), for the same reason the women are to be in submission in regard to their speaking.\(^{113}\)

As previously noted, the overarching theme of this unit is order in the worship service. In order to fulfill this goal, Paul instructs

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the women to submit themselves out of deference to the assembly.

The women are encouraged to ask their husbands at home instead of during the corporate worship. This response may effectively rule out one consideration for the meaning of λαλέων. If the women were involved in "sacred cries" associated with pagan religion, it would be safe to assume that Paul would not tell them to participate in such an activity at home.

Can the admonition mean an absolute injunction against women speaking in the worship? This meaning does not account for the freedom Paul allowed to the Corinthian women in 11:2-16. How can he encourage their use of the spiritual gift of prophecy and prayer in chapter 11 and then totally disallow any participation three chapters later? The text indicates that women's participation in worship was already occurring before Paul addressed the issue of head coverings. Paul merely acknowledged the women's participation in prophecy and prayer as a normal activity. The speaking referred to in 14:34-35 surely refers to something else, unless we assume that Paul encouraged the Corinthians to seek coherent speech patterns in worship by writing to them with incoherent admonitions.

If the women were being silenced for participating in judging the prophets, then the encouragement to ask their husbands at home does not seem to rightly respond to that situation. Paul has emphasized that the function of true prophecy is to edify the community (verse 14:4) and provide public witness (verse 14:24).^{114}

^{114}. Jervis, 61.
Therefore, it seems unlikely that judging the prophets was the nature of their speaking, unless the charge refers to the manner in which it was done.

The nature of the speaking is qualified by the statement in verse 35 "if there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home." Paul has no desire to prevent the women from learning, but disapproves of the place in which they are attempting to do it and/or the manner in which they are trying to learn. Hurley believes that the women were asking questions in such a way that they placed themselves over the prophets, even assigning to themselves the pretentious position of being the spiritual ones.\(^\text{115}\) Objections to the women actually participating in the discerning of the prophets do not make sense when one remembers that Paul had allowed women the freedom to prophesy in 11:2-16. If this is the case, then Paul would not be against the activity of discerning the prophesies in a public worship setting, but opposing the manner in which they did it.\(^\text{116}\)

What appears to be left for consideration is either the constant speaking up in the assembly and/or the exerting of authority over men. Further analysis shows that Paul bases his injunction of submission on the fact that the "law" says so. Some difficulties are associated with the manner in which the "law" was mentioned. It is unusual for Paul not to make a specific reference to a particular Old

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Testament text. Most scholars have taken this to be a reference to the Torah, specifically Genesis 3:17, which states “to the woman [the LORD] said, 'I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.'” The difficulty with this is that Paul appears to be advocating a hierarchy within the context of Christian worship, one that reflects the post-fall conditions. However, his displeasure with the development of a hierarchy in the Christian community is strongly voiced in the first part of this letter.

It seems inconsistent for Paul to return to it on the basis of gender. Paul states in Galatians 3:28 that, “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” This ostensibly conveys the manner in which God values his creation, especially the two genders he made. Galatians 3:28 seems to be in sharp contrast to the post-fall results found in Genesis 3:16. It seems much more likely that Galatians 3:28 reflects the saving work that Jesus accomplished for humanity, thereby removing the curse that was upon his creation. This eschatological view of personhood provides Christians an horizon to peer at, and potentially a whole new framework for viewing passages such as this one.

F. F. Bruce believes that the “law” is a reference to the

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117. Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 707.
creation narratives of Genesis 1:26ff; 2:21ff.\textsuperscript{118} The stress of the reference is then on the order of creation, not on the post-fall result. His argument would then be based on the same Old Testament text as 11:2-16. In that situation, Paul affirmed the distinctions God made during the creation. The application here may be that, just as the head coverings either reflected the creation order or obscured it, so does the manner in which the women are speaking obfuscate the design of God. This analysis certainly has some merit. But the question remains whether the creation distinction applies to the sharing of spiritual gifts in worship.

Some have hypothesized that the reference to "law" is to Paul's own tradition which he has imparted to the churches.\textsuperscript{119} However, there is no other precedent for this type of treatment by Paul. As noted above, there is an intriguing argument that considers verses 34-35 to be Paul quoting or summarizing the position held by a group who were heavily influenced by the Jewish model for corporate worship.\textsuperscript{120} It is hypothesized that this faction attempted to impose upon the assembly their Jewish tradition for women's status in the worship. The form that the verses have reflect the rabbinic format quite well.\textsuperscript{121}

\textsuperscript{118} See O.T. texts on silence. Also, Bruce, 1 & 2 Corinthians, 136.


\textsuperscript{120} Robert W. Allison, 48-52.

\textsuperscript{121} Paul Jewett, Man as Male and Female (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 114.
However, there is no evidence that this type of problem was present in the Christian community in Corinth, and this type of speculation introduces more problems into the text than it resolves.\textsuperscript{122}

Witherington postulates that the Old Testament reference which makes the most sense in context is Job 29:21.\textsuperscript{123} This is predicated upon the occurrence of οικάτωsan (silence) in context with ὑποτασσόμενοι (submission) in the LXX. Job 29:21 declares, “Men listened to me, and waited, and kept silence for my counsel.”

[Job 29:21] involves the silence of respect for a teacher, the silence of someone who is a learner . . . Women are not being commanded to submit to their husbands, but to the principle of order in the worship service, the principle of silence and respect shown when another is speaking.\textsuperscript{124}

This rendering does seem to fit the context very well. It is impossible to know how aware the Corinthians were of this type of counsel. The lack of a reference to the verse, which is unusual for Paul, would seem to indicate that this verse or instruction is well known among them. Assuming this is true, this does seem to solve most of the problems associated with this text.

It seems most appropriate to take the reference to “law” to mean an appeal to respect those who provide counsel by being silent. The veracity of this application most likely rests upon the way in which λαλέων is translated. It is postulated that λαλέων refers to the women incessantly speaking out within the worship setting. The nature of

\textsuperscript{122} Witherington, \textit{Women in the Earliest Churches}, 103.
\textsuperscript{123} Witherington, \textit{Women in the Earliest Churches}, 102, 103.
\textsuperscript{124} Witherington, \textit{Women in the Earliest Churches}, 102, 103.
their speaking may be best summarized by Osburn:

\( \lambda αλείν \) should be taken here to mean that [the women] were "piping up," giving free rein to "irresistible impulses" to ask question after question either of the speaker or of their husbands, creating chaos in the assembly by interfering with communication.\(^{125}\)

This rendition would favor Witherington's view that worship had "turned into a question and answer session."\(^{126}\)

This view also coincides with the exegesis of ὑποπασσέωςαν. The object of their submission is not their husband, as would be the case if reference to the "law" referred to the Genesis scriptures. Reference to Genesis would highlight the creation and family order in the context of manifesting one's spiritual gifts in the worship service. This seems to be at odds with 11:2-16 and Galatians 3:28. Such a reading has promoted the incorrect assumption that patriarchalism and female subjection are the objectives of Paul's message. The objective is order in worship that conveys an understandable message to believers and unbelievers, edifying the ones of faith and hopefully compelling the ones without to turn to the Lord and be saved.

How did the Greco-Roman world affect the issue that Paul confronts within the Corinthian assembly? Corinth represented an unusual setting for a young, upstart church. The port town was quick to receive any new trend or teaching within the bounds of the Roman empire. They were also quick to assimilate them. What were their

\(^{125}\) Osburn, 234.

\(^{126}\) Witherington, Women in the Earliest Churches, 103.
attitudes in regard to the speaking of women in public contexts? According to Pausanias, Strabo, and archaeological digs among the temples at Corinth, women took notable roles in the cults.\textsuperscript{127} This is not conclusive, though. Plutarch states in \textit{Conjugal Precepts} 31 that, “not only the arm but the voice of a modest woman ought to be kept from public, and she should feel shame at being heard, as at being stripped.” In a later paragraph Plutarch continues, “she should speak either to, or through, her husband.” Valerius Maximus (8:3) writes of “those women whom their sex and the modesty of their dress could not cause to refrain from speaking in the marketplace and public law courts.”

In response to this, it should again be noted that Paul affirmed the practice of women prophesying and praying in a worship context. Of further merit is the fact that the church of first century Corinth met in homes, not public places. Therefore, there does not appear to be any hindrance from a societal point of view of women participating in a Christian house-church worship meeting.

Why does Paul appeal to \textit{αἰσχρὸν} (shame) in order to stop the \textit{λαλεῖν} that is occurring during the worship? Shame is the partner to honor that constitutes the social fabric of the ancient Mediterranean world. Fee concludes that this appeal to shame is uncharacteristic of Paul because the topic is not a “general cultural matter,” but one of relational situations within the church.\textsuperscript{128} However, Paul did use this

\textsuperscript{127.} Witherington, \textit{Women in the Earliest Churches}, 97. \\
type of appeal in chapter 11, which is a worship context.

The text before us continues to pose problems for those who exegete it. What can we say about this text with some measure of assurance? The admonition to women to be silent was for a particular situation that involved specific problems. The injunction of Paul does not appear to be a general rule for worship, since Paul had validated the speaking of women in worship in 11:2-16. The women in question were probably married, but that reflects the specific situation Paul encountered. The type of speaking that warranted the admonition was either a constant asking of questions that disrupted the service, or by improperly judging the prophets so as to elevate themselves above the rest. The point of the text is to produce order and coherence within the worship service, not to provide an edict to silence the women.
CHAPTER 5

The Historical Context of Ephesus

If the setting of the Ephesian church can be ascertained, then one may deduce what Paul's intent was in teaching the things he did in 1 Timothy. If the picture that is drawn depicts a situation that is not too much different than a typical Greco-Roman city, then the directives and injunctions from Paul to that church may have a more general application. However, if there were unique problems in Ephesus regarding some of the groups Paul is addressing, then his teachings may have a relative nature that confines them to a particular time, people, and situation. In this later scenario, the teachings have less bearing on the lives of people today. Therefore, it is important to deal with the data available to us regarding the city of Ephesus with great care and respect. The power that God's teaching should have over our lives can be unplugged if we carelessly relegate his message to the past.

What is of major interest to this study is the state of women within this city of Ephesus during the days of Paul's journeys. In recent years, the social and political backdrop of Ephesus has been re-characterized in a manner that has generated a more egalitarian reading of 1 Timothy. 129

The Amazons, according to Ramsay,\(^\text{130}\) belonged to an "old religion" in which women ruled and assigned to men traditionally feminine roles. [Certain evidence] demonstrates the extraordinary strength of the tradition in Asia Minor. Such a pagan element, based upon sex hostility and reversal of roles, may well have found a place in a cult practice among the dissidents in the congregation at Ephesus. The apostle who taught that there is neither male nor female would surely have condemned it. If this were the case, the condemnation is not directed against women participating in leadership but rather against a monopoly on religious power by women."\(^\text{131}\)

Assuming that this portrayal of Ephesus is accurate, Paul's injunction is not against women in general, but against a specific group of women who had inappropriately seized all the control of power within the church. Therefore, the impact of 1 Tim. 2:8-15 on the general understanding of the role of women in the church would be minor and inconsequential. It is critical that an accurate characterization of Ephesus be rendered, with the investigator resisting the desire to accept speculations about the state of Ephesus to be fact.

The city of Ephesus was a Greco-Roman city located along the coastal region of the Aegean Sea, making it well situated for commerce. Although it has a Greek cultural heritage, it had been under foreign domination since King Croesus captured it in the sixth century B.C.\(^\text{132}\) Greek culture permeated the society, even though the Roman presence was strong in this city. Unlike Corinth, the city did not lay dormant for one hundred years before the Romans occupied it.


\(^{131}\) Kroeger, I Suffer Not a Woman, 93.

\(^{132}\) Richard E. Oster, Jr., The Anchor Bible Dictionary, V. 2, 542-549.
Nor did Ephesus enjoy a democratic political setting, like Athens did.

The city of Ephesus was generally dominated by authoritarian individuals or small groups, such as kings, tyrants, and proconsuls. It "never adopted an egalitarian democratic ideology that would necessitate feminism or, minimally, the inclusion of women in public offices."\(^\text{133}\) W. Ramsay, whose work is often used to ascribe matriarchal influences on Ephesus, admits that matriarchal agendas were very unsuccessful in Hellenistic cities.\(^\text{134}\) "At the time of Paul, the political climate was Roman - not feminist."\(^\text{135}\)

Ephesus's municipal establishment resembled the Athenian democratic model with a state assembly made up of a male citizen body which was divided into tribes. There are no documents that identify women as filling the office of the primary magistrates during the first century. The Roman influence on this segment of Ephesian society caused the seats to these bodies to become perpetual, and sometimes hereditary. The concept of Roman patriarchy appeared to blend with the Ephesian institutions, making female rule very unlikely. "Even though women had some public roles at Ephesus, leadership in the political and social spheres was solidly in the


hands of exclusively male institutions."  

The religious life of the city of Ephesus involved the worship of many deities, like most Greco-Roman cities during the first century. One deity that stood out, both physically and religiously, was the temple of Artemis. One of the Seven Wonders of the World, it was four times larger than the Athenian Parthenon. The notoriety of this temple is evidenced in Acts 19:34-36:

for about two hours all of them shouted in unison, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" But when the town clerk had quieted the crowd, he said, "Citizens of Ephesus, who is there that does not know that the city of the Ephesians is the temple keeper of the great Artemis and of the statue that fell from heaven? Since these things cannot be denied, you ought to be quiet and do nothing rash.

Acts 19:24-7 also indicates that this temple resulted in tourism and commerce for the Ephesians. The temple was the city's central economic power, especially in banking and landholding. The city's most prominent religious force was intimately connected to the city's commerce.

The religious affairs of the temple were controlled by the civil magistrates, with the Roman governors influencing the seats and the decisions. The civil government positions and the religious hierarchy were interconnected, with magistrates usually holding the position of priest in the temple. Although some have postulated that women were in control of the temple affairs, it has been undeniably established

137. Ibid., 22.
that this is not based on factual evidence.\textsuperscript{138} The "kouretes" were called priestesses by the Kroegers,\textsuperscript{139} and therefore, rule of the temple was attributed to women. However, the inscription evidence indicates that the "kouretes" were actually men, not "female dancers."\textsuperscript{140} Also, these "kouretes" were frequently members of the city council, again displaying the close relationship between the civic and religious activities in the city. The religious power was not in the hands of women, as some have suggested.\textsuperscript{141}

Many have suggested that Artemis of Ephesus was the Asian mother-goddess, the symbol of fertility.\textsuperscript{142} However this view has been debunked on several fronts. M. Morford and R. Lenardon have concluded that, "whatever the roots of her fertility connections, the dominant conception of Artemis in the classical period is that of the virgin huntress."\textsuperscript{143} Oster, an expert on the cult of Artemis and the city of Ephesus, disclaims the concept that this goddess represented a fertility goddess because of "the deafening silence from all the primary sources. None of the extant myths point in this direction,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{138} Baugh, "The Apostle Among the Amazons," 153-71.
\item \textsuperscript{139} Kroegers, \textit{I Suffer Not a Woman}, 186-7.
\item \textsuperscript{140} Baugh, "A Foreign World," 25-6.
\item \textsuperscript{141} Kroegers, \textit{I Suffer Not a Woman}, 71, 196.
\item \textsuperscript{143} Mark P. O. Morford and Robert J. Lenardon, \textit{Classical Mythology} 4\textsuperscript{th} ed. (New York: Longman, 1991), 182.
\end{itemize}
neither do the significant epithets of the goddess.\textsuperscript{144} The religious world of the city of Ephesus was principally ruled by men.\textsuperscript{145} The speculations that the city was a matriarchal society is not founded on actual evidence, but on speculation. The backdrop in the city of Ephesus was not a woman-controlled city, but a typical Greco-Roman metropolis with men in primary charge.

It is assumed the level of education of women in antiquity was less than men.\textsuperscript{146} Women were not doctors, teachers, philosophers, and sophists in the ancient world. However, few individuals received training beyond an elementary education by today's standards.\textsuperscript{147} Yet certain women did receive training in private salons, especially the upper-class women. Also, the home was usually managed by women, and this certainly required a minimal level of social and commercial skills in order to protect the interests of her and her family.

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{144} Baugh, "A Foreign World," 29.\textsuperscript{145} Ibid., 32.\textsuperscript{146} Keener, 83.\textsuperscript{147} Baugh, "A Foreign World," 46.}
The letter begins with the customary greeting (vv. 1:1-2), followed by the thanksgiving which extends through verse 1:20. In the thanksgiving, Paul\(^{148}\) indicates the reason for his writing this letter to Timothy.

I urge you, as I did when I was on my way to Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus so that you may instruct certain people not to teach any different doctrine, and not to occupy themselves with myths and endless genealogies that promote speculations rather than the divine training that is known by faith. (vv. 1:3-4)

An important purpose of this communication was to make Timothy aware of the need to instruct certain people not to teach different teachings. Along with "myths" and "endless genealogies," Paul adds "meaningless talk" and the "law"\(^{149}\) as items that have been subject to their error (vv. 1:5-7).

The mentioning of the Law in verse 7 opens the door for one to

\(^{148}\) Paul's authorship is assumed. Although this is a debated topic, it does have support. E. Earle Ellis, in Paul and His Recent Interpreters, (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1961), 57, writes, "Among those favouring their genuineness are scholars representing a considerable variety of theological viewpoints: Zahn (1906), Torm (1932), Thoernell (1933), Schlatter (1936), Michaelis (1946), Spicq (1947), Behm (1948), de Zwaan (1948), Jeremias (1953), Simpson (1954), and Guthrie (1957)." The numbers have been increasing since 1961 because there is not enough evidence against Paul's authorship to be certain. However, it is still a minority opinion.

speculate that Judaizers may be present and active amidst the congregation. Even though a strong Jewish presence existed within the city, the Law was probably not the main problem Paul was battling in this letter. Paul affirms that the "law is good, if one uses it legitimately" (v. 1:8). Paul's failure to expound on this theme (as he did in Romans and Galatians) suggests that Paul's central concern is not with errors associated with Judaizers. Rather, he is appealing to the "innocent" to remember that the law is for evil doers, such as he once was. He illustrates in verses 12-17, using his own life, how the misuse and misunderstanding of the law can produce a "blasphemer, a persecutor, and a man of violence," having "acted ignorantly in unbelief" (v. 13). Paul mentions two men, Hymenaeus and Alexander, who have "shipwrecked their faith" because they "rejected their conscience" (vv. 19-20). Much of Paul's appeal to Timothy is to maintain a clear conscience.

The next major unit appears to consist of verses 2:1-3:16. He introduces the unit with "first of all, then," and then explains his reasons for this unit with verses 14-15: "I am writing these instructions to you so that, if I am delayed, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth." He concludes in verse 3:16 with a "common confession, a verse with lyrical

qualities and creed-like statements. The topics that Paul covered in this unit include the appropriate behavior for men and women in the worship and during the teaching times of the church (vv. 2:1-15). He also instructs them regarding the qualities and qualifications of leadership in the local congregation (vv. 3:1-13).

In the next unit, verses 4:1-6:2, Paul returns to the topic of false teaching, having left it since chapter 1. Paul advises Timothy about numerous issues pertaining to specific problems existing in their house churches. Some of these specific issues include the enrollment of the widows by the church (5:3-16), the appropriate way to manage accusations against elders (5:17-22), and the obligations of slaves (6:1-2). Paul concludes the main body of his letter with some miscellaneous reminders about the evil desires of the false teachers, and some admonitions concerning how he should maintain his conduct and heart in dealing with them (vv. 6:3-6:21).

Certainly, a main reason for the occasion of writing this epistle was to combat false teaching. Unfortunately, evidence from the epistle itself does not paint a complete picture about these

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false teachers. They apparently were preoccupied with "myths and endless genealogies."

Chapter 2 begins with Paul emphasizing how God "desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." Paul specifically mentions "kings and all who are in high positions" as ones to pray and intercede for. It is conceivable that the false teachers restricted salvation to certain individuals because of the emphasis upon "genealogies" and "myths." Paul exercises his apostolic authority (2:7) in declaring God's purpose and desire for the salvation of all people through the Christ.

Verse 8 begins with βούλομαι οὖν, which translates "therefore, I wish." It has been suggested that βούλομαι indicates an "apostolic demand," although this is not the more general term (παρακάλω) that Paul uses for forceful admonitions. The fact that it follows Paul's reminding them of his apostolic call enforces this idea. The word "therefore," (ὦν), communicates a close relationship between the

155. 1 Tim. 1:4, 4:7.
156. 1 Tim. 2:4.
157. 1 Tim. 2:2.
preceding discussion, verses 1-7, and verse 8. Paul's exhortation to prayer in verse 8 may indicate that the "anger" and "argument" affected the prayers for the salvation of all people. Paul expects the church to pray for the redemption of all souls when the church meets.

The reference to "in every place" (ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ) probably refers to the house churches that met in the homes. It is reasonable to assume that these meetings reflected their formal worship assemblies.\(^{160}\) It is also just as true that this reference was applicable to all churches gathered everywhere. The concerns Paul is expressing (namely, proper clothing, attitudes, and control over women speaking) are also addressed toward public assemblies in 1 Corinthians.

Just as the translation of ἀνὴρ and γυνὴ in 1 Cor. 11:2-16 has a few scholars who challenge the generally accepted meaning, so it is in this text also. As mentioned previously, the problem arises because ἀνὴρ and γυνὴ can mean "husband" and "wife," or they can mean "man" and "woman." If one believes that the proper translation is "husband" and "wife," then the admonition against teaching is not directed at all women, but toward one's wife in the context of their relationship with their husbands. "Women" are then not necessarily banned from teaching men, if this is true. Consequently, if "man" and "woman" are correct, then the directive can apply to all women, not just wives. The danger here is that one's bias for the extent that Paul's prohibition covers, whether women in general or wives in

\(^{160}\) See references in note 121 above.
particular, can directly influence their exegesis.

Since it is clear that these words can be interpreted in either of these manners, then context is critical in determining the proper usage. The flow of thought has been one of combating false teachers at work in the Ephesian church. This unit (2:1-3:16) directs the church to "know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth." The public setting is certainly the arena Paul has in mind. Paul tells Timothy to appoint acceptable overseers and deacons for the church to fortify it and make it the "pillar and bulwark of the truth." The church has as its purpose the charge to pray that all people be saved. The letter does not relate any husband-wife issues to Timothy. In fact, this does not appear to fuse with the larger issues that Paul is directing Timothy upon. Another argument for the rendering of these words as "man" and "woman" is the absence of a definite article with υἱός. The general sense of the word is indicated. Most commentators hold the terms to mean "men" and "women."

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161. 1 Tim. 3:15.
162. Fee, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, 71.
Arguments against "man" and "wife" usually involve the manner in which ἄνὴρ and γυνή, when used together, are interpreted in Paul's other letters. Gordon Hugenberger\textsuperscript{164} claims that since this text is quite similar to 1 Peter 3:1-7, then the interpretation should follow that context. Others agree that there is a similarity between the two texts, but disagree with that reasoning for altering the meanings of ἄνὴρ and γυνῆ.\textsuperscript{165} Hugenberger also draws comparisons with several other texts for insisting that Paul means "husbands" and "wives" in 1 Timothy. However, what he fails to take into account is that each of the other passages explicitly indicate from their context that a meaning of "husbands" and "wives" is intended.\textsuperscript{166} As quoted earlier, "such passages are not even debated with respect to this issue."\textsuperscript{167} He also argues against a public setting, but again, the epistle of 1 Timothy should rule in determining the context. The preferred reading is "man" and "woman."

Verse 8 calls for men to pray by "raising holy hands." This does not appear to be the focus of the verse, for the phrase is a circumstantial participial phrase.\textsuperscript{168} The raising of holy hands was a


\textsuperscript{165} Witherington, \textit{Women in the Churches}, 117-9.


\textsuperscript{167} Schreiner, "An Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:9-15," 116.

\textsuperscript{168} Knight, \textit{Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles}, 128-9; Geer, 289-90.
posture well known among the Jews and Greeks, as well as Christians. The practice’s purpose was one of drawing into focus the unity of our bodies and minds.

Paul may want to emphasize here the posture or gesture as appropriate to the seriousness and urgency of prayer in general and prayer for all people and authorities in particular and as providing for a unity of body and mind in prayer (the body joining with the voice and heart in being lifted up to God).”

Yet the focus was upon the manner in which they were raised, “without anger or argument.” The connection of this verse with 6:3-5 is instructive. The activities of the false teachers in worship may well be the driving force behind this admonition. It is also worth noting that some of the qualities required in an overseer are “not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome” (3:3-4), a contrast with the false teachers.

The term ὀρθάωμι begins verse 9, and is loosely translated “likewise.” There is much disagreement over whether this indicates that the men and women are involved in the same activities, namely praying. Many believe that the implied verb, “I desire” (βούλομαι), takes the infinitive “to pray” (προσεύχομαι). Witherington, Women in the Earliest Churches, 119-20; Barrett, The Pastoral Epistles, 55; Keener, 102-3. Others see the infinitive “to adorn” (κοσμεῖν) as a more likely complement to the verb “I desire.” There are examples that show that the term does not

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169. Knight, Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles, 129.


imply the same activities.\textsuperscript{172}

It is necessary to note that verse 8 does not necessarily comment on whether women can pray or not in worship. Some who believe that verse 8 does not say that women were "to pray in modest clothing," assume that men are the only ones instructed to pray in worship. However, the ambiguity in the phrase should cause those to be less constrictive in their reading. The case for women praying in the worship does not seem to be the issue here. Regardless, 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 should have already established the fact that women were involved in "prayer" and "prophesying" in the worship assembly.

Paul wants the women to adorn themselves with suitable "deportment" (κατάστολη). This word appears to apply to external and internal characteristics.

"Deportment" (κατάστολη) can refer sometimes to external appearance, sometimes to character and disposition, sometimes to both. Since "modest" (κομίω) is stressed in the honorary inscriptions precisely as a virtue of women, and since the language of the Pastorals show a certain relationship with that of the inscriptions, the expression under discussion can hardly be restricted to clothing.\textsuperscript{173}

Some suggest that the dressing up by a woman in the first century may have expressed "sexual wantonness and wifely insubordination."\textsuperscript{174} Paul wants the women to dress "modestly and decently in suitable clothing, not with their hair braided, or with gold, pearls, or expensive

\textsuperscript{172} 1 Tim. 3:8, 11; 5:25; Titus 2:3, 6.

\textsuperscript{173} Dibelius and Conzelmann, 45-6.

\textsuperscript{174} Fee, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, 71.
clothes." As noted above, modesty was a Greco-Roman virtue for women. Some suggest that Paul's remarks refer to women who are wealthy.¹⁷⁵

There is nothing that a woman will not permit herself to do, nothing that she deems shameful, when she encircles her neck with green emeralds, and fastens huge pearls to her elongated ears: there is nothing more intolerable than a wealthy woman.¹⁷⁶

Hurley has noted that extravagant hairstyles were probably involved. He believes that Paul refers to:

...elaborate hairstyles which were fashionable among the wealthy and also to the styles worn by courtesans. 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. The courtesans wore their hair in numerous small pendant braids with gold droplets or pearls or gems every inch or so, making a shimmery screen of their locks.¹⁷⁷

It would appear that Paul is not banning the wearing of jewelry, per se, but is reacting to practices of women trying to make themselves attractive by external means. This especially involved the wealthy who were probably somewhat influenced by the rich of their day. The text also appears to instruct women not to wear clothing that may be seductive or enticing. "Women should not flaunt their wealth or their beauty,"¹⁷⁸ but should focus on those inner qualities that produce "good works."

Paul emphasizes "good works" as the means by which a woman should


¹⁷⁸. Lea and Griffin, 1 2 Timothy, Titus, 96.
make herself attractive. Kelly believes the phrase should be translated "deeds of charity" instead.\textsuperscript{179} The inner qualities of a woman that are attractive produce external results that benefit others, not her outside appearance. "A woman's adornment, in short, lies not in what she herself puts on, but in the loving service she gives out."\textsuperscript{180} Witherington rightly points out that the manner in which the women conduct themselves "could attract the wrong sort of attention and compromise the moral witness of the church."\textsuperscript{181} Therefore, this discussion fits neatly within the larger context that concerns Paul, namely the salvation of all people.

The next two verses, 11-12, continue Paul's concern for the church and its witness. The women are exhorted "to learn" (μαθηταίοντο) in "quietness" (ἡσυχία) and in all "submissiveness" (ὑποταγή). Verse 11 begins with γυνὴ ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ and verse 12 ends with ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ. The structure would seem to indicate that ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ is where the emphasis lies. This term can be translated either "quietness" or "silence." Much debate has occurred over which meaning is appropriate.\textsuperscript{182} Arguments for "quietness" emphasize the typical meaning of ἡσυχίᾳ in other NT passages, with special emphasis on 1 Tim. 2:2. The usual term for

\textsuperscript{179} Kelly, 67.

\textsuperscript{180} Guthrie, 75.

\textsuperscript{181} Witherington, Women in the Earliest Churches, 1119-20.

"silence" is σιγάω, which is found in 1 Cor. 14: 28, 30, 34. Also, it does not seem reasonable for the women to live a "silent life." Arguments for "silence" emphasize that this is a possible translation of the word (see Luke 14:4; Acts 22:2). Paul only uses σιγάω as a verbal form, never as a noun. If Paul needed to communicate "silence," then his vocabulary would suggest ἡσυχία is the word he would use. Also, the term is contrasted with not being allowed to teach or have authority over men. The natural contrast would seem to be "silence." Fortunately, "the meaning of the text is not drastically changed either way."  

Paul uses the verb "to learn" seven times in the Pastoral epistles, and it typically means to learn through instruction. In this instance, he uses the imperative form of the verb. A welcome positive can be noticed here because some facets of Judaism forbade women to learn. However, the point of the command appears to be in the "manner and the mode of their learning." It has already been

183. Witherington, Women in the Earliest Churches, 120.


pointed out that they should learn in "quietness" or in "silence." What is remaining is the term "in all submissiveness."

The word "submissiveness," (ὑποταγή), describes the appropriate disposition one should have when learning. The real question concerns the one to whom the women are to be in "submission." Some possible objects of the submission are men, husbands, the elders and church officials, sound doctrine, the congregation, and many more. However, it seems that the structure of the text may indicate the object of the submission. As mentioned above, ἣ αὐτή frames verses 11-12, creating an inclusio.

Verses 11 and 12 constitute an inclusio; verse 11 begins with "in silence" and verse 12 concludes with "in silence." The permission for women to "learn" is contrasted with the proscription for them to "teach," while "all submissiveness" is paired with "not exercising authority over a man." The submission in view, then, is likely to men, since verse 12 bans women from exercising authority over men.

The men who are receivers of this submission are likely the men who are leaders of the church, who have authority through their lives and their teaching.

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190. Dibelius and Conzelmann, 47; Gritz, Paul, Women Teachers, and the Mother Goddess at Ephesus, 130.
Verse 12 begins with a mild adversative, ὁδὲ, that draws a contrast and ties these two verses together. Some have suggested a chiasm between them. This certainly indicates their close relationship and substantiates the analysis mentioned above which paralleled certain phrases.

Another controversial word is the verb οὐκ ἔπρεπέω, which means "I do not permit" (or allow). The contention involves the permanence of the injunction. Some suggest that this word reflected a personal preference of Paul. They usually appeal to the tense of the verb for their contention that it is a temporal prohibition, particular to this situation. Payne notes that the verb "usually does not refer to a continuing state and can only be determined to have a continuing effect where there are clear indicators to that effect in the context." There are also assertions that the verb typically means a temporary injunction.

There have been many challenges to the scholarship presented

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196. ἔπρεπέω is parsed as first person singular, present active indicative.

197. Payne, 170.
above. Knight has noted numerous words that have the same form as ἐπιτρέπω, yet give "universal and authoritative instruction and exhortation."⁹⁸ One of particular note is Rom. 12:1. The church has universally accepted its exhortation as applicable to them. Yet there is not an obvious indicator within the near context that suggests that the command is universal. Moo responds to Payne concerning Payne's contention that the verb indicates the restricted personal advice:

> It seems to me that Payne has framed the question wrongly in assuming that Paul uses the present tense to restrict his advice. ... the personal address to Timothy, in which advice for a current situation was being given, virtually demands the use of the present tense. Therefore, the first person present of ἐπιτρέπω allows for a limited application but does not constitute clear evidence for it."⁹⁹

Bowman⁹⁰ argues that the use of ἐπιτρέπω in 1 Cor. 14:34, where women were not permitted to speak, is not Paul's personal advice, but an injunction that is effectively the Lord's commandment.⁹¹ Therefore, the intrinsic meaning of the word, which some believed was temporal, is doubted. Also, Bowman states that the use of Paul's personal authority does not make the command relative. Paul used his personal authority in 1 Cor. 11:16 to confirm a practice accepted by all the

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⁹⁸. Knight, 140. The verses are Rom. 12:1,3; 1 Cor. 4:16; 2 Cor. 5:20; Gal. 5:2,3; Eph. 4:1; 1 Thes. 4:1, 5:14; 2 Thes. 3:6; 1 Tim 2:1, 8).


⁹⁰. Bowman, 199-200.

⁹¹. Verse 14:37 says, "Anyone who claims to be a prophet, or to have spiritual powers, must acknowledge that what I am writing to you is a command of the Lord." This references 1 Cor. 14:26-36.
churches. Much of Payne's endorsement for a temporary nature to Paul's command rests on the tense of the verb. However, critique of his assessment has resulted in most scholars, including Payne, concluding that only the context can resolve the question. "It is tenuous to decide for or against the permanence of Paul's injunction based on the evidence of tense alone.\textsuperscript{202}

Teaching (διδάσκειν) and exercising authority over a man (αὐθεντεῖν) are prohibited for a woman, according to verse 12. Lines are drawn as to whether the "teaching" involved is authoritative and therefore, restrictive,\textsuperscript{203} or a general teaching.\textsuperscript{204} Bowman notes that the word almost exclusively refers to the public instruction or the teaching in groups.\textsuperscript{205} Payne contends that "although Paul at times used various forms of the word to express authoritative Christian teaching, he also used the word to refer to believers in general teaching one another."\textsuperscript{206} Geer seems to sidestep the authoritative aspect of the word by shifting the focus to the concern in antiquity about a "domineering" woman.\textsuperscript{207} Of course this involves the meaning of the word αὐθεντεῖν which will be discussed later. Assuming that authority was

\textsuperscript{202} Lea and Griffin, 98.

\textsuperscript{203} Moo, "1 Tim. 2:11-15: A Rejoinder," 200-2; Schreiner, "An Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:9-15," 127.

\textsuperscript{204} Witherington, Women in the Church, 121; Payne, 173-5.

\textsuperscript{205} Bowman, 200; Roy B. Zuck, "Greek Words for Teach," Bibliotheca Sacra 122 (1965), 159-60.

\textsuperscript{206} Payne, 173-5.

\textsuperscript{207} Geer, 292-4.
inherent in the role of teacher in the first century, the idea of a woman assuming this role may directly contrast with the type of "quiet" (ησυχία) spirit in learning he had been advocating.\textsuperscript{208}

The Greek view of teachers prevented 'respectable' women from occupying that role. Greek education was centered around a master who had a deep, personal, extended relationship with his pupils. Originally this relationship included pederasty. While the sexual element receded, reverence for the teacher never did. By definition he was an authority figure. The paucity of women teachers, then, is not surprising. Because of the authority inherent in the Greek conception of the role, women teachers would have been unacceptably domineering. They could not have been teachers and still have appeared to be the submissive figures society demanded them to be.\textsuperscript{209}

The authoritative aspect of teaching would therefore be supported by this rendering.

Schreiner agrees with the progressives that the ban against women teaching is not absolute, but he contends that it is probably because their teaching involved groups which contained men and women.\textsuperscript{210} The construction of verse 12 deserves investigation to evaluate this contention. Payne and Moo have argued over the syntactical significance of οὐδὲ, which connects the two infinitives, διδάσκειν and αὐθεντεῖν, in this sentence. Payne contended that the

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\textsuperscript{208} Learning in respectful quietness was expected of anyone learning in antiquity, especially men. However, the contrast drawn is between the role a teacher occupied, one of authority and reverence, as compared to the role which was appropriate for a woman, one of submission.


\textsuperscript{210} Schreiner, "An Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:9-15," 127-8.
structure forms a "single coherent idea," rendering the passage to say: "I do not permit a woman to teach in a domineering manner."\textsuperscript{211} Moo countered that \(\omega \nu \delta \varepsilon\) can join "two closely related items, it does not usually join together words that restate the same thing or that are mutually interpreting."\textsuperscript{212} Therefore, Moo's interpretation of verse 12 would render it: "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man." Kostenberger\textsuperscript{213} has analyzed the sentence structure of verse 12 quite extensively. He emphasizes the fact that since \(\alpha \nu \theta e v \tau e i v\) is an hapax legomenon, word studies will have limited value. However, if there is a structure present that offers clues to this sentence, then a syntactical study can prove itself invaluable.

The pattern that Kostenberger is investigating looks like the following:

\begin{quote}
(1)a negated finite verb + (2) infinitive + (3) \(\omega \nu \delta \varepsilon\) + infinitive + (4) \(\alpha \lambda \lambda \alpha\) + infinitive\textsuperscript{214}
\end{quote}

His study exceeded that of Payne by studying all of the New Testament occurrences, not just constructions that join verbs, and he refrains from assuming the meaning of \(\alpha \nu \theta e v \tau e i v\) until after the study is


\textsuperscript{212} Douglas J. Moo, "What Does It Mean Not To Teach or Have Authority over Men? 1 Timothy 2:11-15," in Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood - A Response to Evangelical Feminism, ed. J. Piper and W. Grudem (Wheaton: Crossway, 1991), 187; Kostenberger, 82.

\textsuperscript{213} Kostenberger, 81-103.

\textsuperscript{214} Kostenberger, 82. The final element (4) \(\alpha \lambda \lambda \alpha\) + infinitive) is not always found.
completed. By opening the study to extrabiblical literature, he found forty-eight parallel constructions. His findings reveal that the construction always results in parallelism between the two connected verbs. Therefore, since διδάσκειν is always viewed as an activity that is in and of itself positive, then ἀνθυετεῖν likewise should be positive as well.²¹⁵ If a negative view of teaching was desired, Paul would have used ἐπεροδιδασκαλεῖν (1 Tim. 1:3; 6:3). Kostenberger concludes:

> Since then the first part of 1 Timothy 2:12 reads “But I do not permit a woman to teach” and the coordinating conjunction οὐδὲ requires the second activity to be viewed correspondingly by the writer, ἀνθυετεῖν should be viewed positively as well and be rendered “to have (or exercise) authority,” and not “to flout the authority of” or “to domineer.”²¹⁶

This “back door” method of determining the meaning of ἀνθυετεῖν may be unorthodox, but the sentence structure offered a unique opportunity to isolate a disputed word used only once in the New Testament, and give clues to an acceptable rendering.

The above analysis has forced the meaning of ἀνθυετεῖν to be “to have (or exercise) authority.” Yet, the meaning of ἀνθυετεῖν has been widely debated over recent decades. The wealth of meanings that have been created include “engage in fertility practices,”²¹⁷ “author or originator of a man,”²¹⁸ and “instigate violence.”²¹⁹ Since the word is

²¹⁵. Kostenberger, 91.
²¹⁶. Kostenberger, 103.
²¹⁸. Kroeger, I Suffer Not a Woman, 103.
²¹⁹. L.E. Wilshire, “1 Timothy 2:12 Revisited: A Reply to Paul W. Barrett and Timothy J. Harris,” Evangelical Quarterly 65
an hapax legomenon, the door is open for an endless parade of reasons for particular translations. Word studies have been performed defending both sides of the issue. The recent wave of interest unfortunately appears to be tied to the progressive work of scholars trying to ground their particular view of women's role into scripture. However, in light of the extensive structural analysis performed by Kostenberger, the meaning of "exercise authority" appears to be the best rendering of this word until someone else presents a more impressive argument otherwise.\textsuperscript{220}

The last part of this passage deals with the reasoning for the regulation of women concerning their relationship with men in church. Verse 13 begins with γὰρ (for), which normally indicates that what follows establishes the cause for what preceded. Therefore, the reasons why women are not to teach and have authority over men is because "Adam was formed first, and then Eve." However, this understanding has been contested. Some\textsuperscript{221} suggest that verses 13-14 offer examples for the result that would occur when women falsely teach men. However, this is very strained reading that goes against the grain of Paul's normal, logical use of this word.

The next issue that surfaces is what part of Genesis does Paul


\textsuperscript{221} Mickelsen, "Egalitarian View," 203; Gritz, \textit{Mother Goddess}, 136.
refer to, the creation or the fall. Fee suggest that the reference is not to the created order. However, it is very difficult to see how this can be. The text says that Adam was formed ( ) first. This word, along with the natural reading of the text, indicates that Paul is referring to the second creation account in Gen. 2:4-25. It is worthwhile to note that the reason for the injunction against women was not based upon the fall. Therefore arguments suggesting that the role distinctions were based on the fall, and, therefore, are no longer operative due to Christ's atoning work, are without justification. This charge to women has its roots in the order of creation, and these verses offer insight into what this means.

Some dismiss this reading based upon their own perception that a created distinction in roles necessarily implies a created discrepancy in worth and value. As stated before, a difference in roles does not imply a difference in value or personhood. As Schreiner points out:

It is a modern, democratic, Western notion that diverse functions suggest distinctions in worth between men and women. Paul believed that men and women were equal in personhood, dignity, and value but also taught that women had a distinct role from men.

Both 1 Cor. 11:8-9 and this text indicate that role distinctions exist due to the creation order. Whether this seems equitable in a


twentieth century context should not cause the scholar to force a change on Paul's meaning in his communications to the churches and evangelists.

The scholars who charge that Paul was culturally conditioned treat the text much more fairly than the ones who strain to make these texts say something different from what they appear to so clearly say. Those scholars who are egalitarians but allow Paul to mean what he says, merely disagree with him because his culture limited his ability to properly deal with this issue, which some say parallels his stance on slavery.\textsuperscript{225} Others attack the easier reading because they can not philosophically agree with it. The manner in which verse 13 is viewed by these scholars exemplifies this thesis. T. Harris,\textsuperscript{226} D. Scholer,\textsuperscript{227} S. Motyer,\textsuperscript{228} and Keener\textsuperscript{229} argue that this verse is difficult to comprehend. Fee\textsuperscript{230} and Evans\textsuperscript{231} negate the significance of this verse to the injunction against women because it

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{226} Timothy J. Harris, "Why did Paul Mention Eve's Deception? A Critique of P. W. Barnett's Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2," \textit{Evangelical Quarterly} 62 (1990), 343.
\item \textsuperscript{227} David Scholer, "Women in the Church's Ministry. Does 1 Timothy 2:9-15 Help or Hinder?" \textit{Daughters of Sarah} v.16, no.4 (1990), 208-13.
\item \textsuperscript{228} Steve Motyer, "Expounding 1 Timothy 2:8-15," \textit{Vox Evangelica} 24 (1994), 97-8.
\item \textsuperscript{229} Craig Keener, \textit{Women's Ministries}, 116.
\item \textsuperscript{230} Fee, \textit{Gospel and Spirit}, 58.
\item \textsuperscript{231} Evans, \textit{Woman in the Bible}, 104.
\end{itemize}
is not central to his argument. Yet the traditional reading of the text felt no tension in this passage, nor in the reference to the O.T. text. The scholars who claim that Paul is illogical at least are willing to concede that the historic reading of the text is reasonable.\textsuperscript{232}

The text indicates that the created order underlies the reason for man having a leadership position over woman. The text does not imply that the reason was due to the women being uneducated. Nor does it indicate that the reason was because the women were responsible for the heretical teachings in Ephesus. For it to be true, one must assume that all the women were engaged in this activity, and that no men were. Paul has warned the Ephesian elders that wolves would rise up from among themselves.\textsuperscript{233} It is naive to conjecture that all women were creating the heresy and that no men were involved.\textsuperscript{234}

Paul's argument continues with an appeal to the fact that Eve was deceived, not Adam. The argument arises that this is evidence that the women were involved in the false teaching because the false teachers found fertile ground among the women. This hypothesis argues, among other things, that the women were uneducated or were responsible for the heresy of false teaching. Speculation exists that Eve wrongly taught Adam, and therefore, this is the foundation for the injunction. Connected with this is the idea that Eve was not

\textsuperscript{232} e.g., Jewett, \textit{Male and Female}, 116.

\textsuperscript{233} Acts 20:29-30.

\textsuperscript{234} Carson, 147.
privy to the instruction that God gave to Adam concerning the fruit of the tree.

These hypotheses seek to evade a more fundamental element that is present in this verse. The emphasis of verse 14 is that Eve was deceived, not that she wrongly instructed others. One can reasonably conclude that the women may be more likely to be influenced by false teachers because of Paul's rationale. But the next step is certainly one of conjecture, not probability. The same can be said of the argument that women were less educated or informed, like Eve was possibly less informed. Again, the logic of this argument is not sound. If Eve was improperly taught, then Adam (or man) surely should not be rewarded with the authoritative position of teacher. If Adam failed to instruct Eve, then his position as head of the household is without merit. If Eve was amiss in her understanding of God's command to Adam, then this does not reflect well upon her capability or capacity as a woman, which again does not fit the feminist model for true womanhood.

The one reading that has been traditionally accepted is that women are "more liable to deception, more gullible, and more easily led astray than men." This reading is rejected in a twentieth century context. It must be reasoned away because present day awareness generally disregards it as archaic and chauvinistic. The question that must be answered, though, is what did Paul really mean when he penned these words? The answer does not necessarily depend

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upon the researcher's concept of justice and appropriateness. If role
distinctions were part of the fabric of their society, then these
ideas cannot be lightly tossed out, even if contemporary society has
no place for such concepts. The fact that roles were acknowledged by
Paul, and were based upon creation accounts, appears to be a very
reasonable reading of these scriptures. Therefore, the scholars who
politely disagree with Paul because of his cultural conditioning
appear to deal with these issues better because they allow Paul to
say what appears to be the reasonable reading.

If the historic reading is most appropriate, then some
considerations need to be addressed. Does the text imply that Adam
was not deceived? The text does not address Adam's part in this
process. The emphasis is upon the actions of Eve. Adam was held
accountable for the sin that condemned the entire human race. If
anything could be possibly suggested from this scenario, it is that
Adam functions as "head" of the relationship, carrying the
responsibility for the actions of his family. This reasoning could
logically conclude that the serpent undermined the pattern of male
headship by only interacting with Eve during the temptation.

Many studies have been performed over the decades about the
differences, of lack thereof, between men and women. Without entering
into that arena, this student of the Word merely desires to draw a

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236. Rom. 5:12-9.

"Ministry in the New Testament," in *The Church in the Bible and
the World*, ed. D. A. Carson, (Grand Rapids, Mi.: Baker, 1987),
202.
conclusion in the same manner that Paul drew one in 1 Cor. 11: 14-5. Nature itself teaches humankind many things about the two sexes. Even though researchers have spent many years and much money trying to evaluate whether there are differences between man and woman, the average person was not impressed. Nature teaches that there are general differences, albeit with some exceptions. Paul not only confirms this distinction, he affirms this distinction, and he also explains this distinction. In the created order of things, man and woman are different.

The last verse again is very problematic. The shift between singular and plural creates some stumbling blocks. The term ομοθύματα has been interpreted “preserve” by some scholars. Yet this reading does not seem appropriate. The risk of death in childbirth was very high in ancient days. Therefore, little comfort could be garnered from this reading. Also, the term always has the idea of spiritual salvation in the Pastoral Epistles. Although this conclusion creates some difficulties, it does appear proper to render it as meaning spiritual salvation.

The next word that requires attention is ἀθυραμνίας. Some see this verse as a reference to the birth of Christ. The view holds that

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238. For a thorough analysis of this problem, see Witherington, Women in the Earliest Churches, 123-4; Schreiner, “An Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:9-15,” 146-53.

239. Jewett, 60; Keener, Women’s Ministry, 118-9.

240. Fung, 203.

"she," that is Eve, will be saved by childbirth, specifically the birth of Jesus through Mary. In fulfillment of the promise in Gen. 3:15, Eve is saved through childbirth. The definite article before "childbirth" also supports this view of the meaning of this scripture.

This has been effectively countered by several scholars. A. Hanson describes this view as "more romantic than convincing." Fee explains that the noun τεκνογονίας accentuates the actual birth process, not the effect or result of childbirth. This creates a lot of difficulty for this reading, since the effect of the birth is essentially the point. The presence of the definite article does not necessarily indicate a reference to Christ. Also, the reading becomes very obscure and ambiguous.

The more accepted meaning is that women are saved by giving attention to their traditional role, which is represented by bearing children. The subject of οὐσθρηκτεῖα is not Eve, but "women" in general. Some may balk at the apparent contradiction of salvation through the grace of Christ, and the salvation proposed here through the act of bearing children. However, there is no contradiction at all. Witherington relates that:

We are familiar with the Pauline dictum at Phil. 2:12 - 'work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.' I thus conclude that

\[\text{References:}\]


243. Fee, 1 Timothy, 75.


245. Geer, 297 n.47.
exegetical gymnastics are unnecessary, for our author is not telling women how they may be saved, but how they may work out their salvation, how they may remain in faith, love, and holiness.²⁴⁶

Schreiner carries the analysis further:

[Paul] selects childbearing because it is the most notable example of the divinely intended difference in role between men and women, and most women throughout history have had children. Thus, Paul generalizes from the experience of most women in using a representative example of women maintaining their proper role.²⁴⁷

It is not childbearing that saves them, but their dedication to the role that makes them distinctively “women” does help them “work out their salvation in fear and trembling.”

The conclusions on this passage are certainly not new nor complete. The text begins by calling men to pray without quarreling. Women are called to adorn themselves not just modestly in outward attire, but with good works that reflect reference for God. Women are instructed to learn in submission. The women are instructed not to teach or have authority over man. The sense here is not that women are supposedly trying to domineer man, but that the position of authority or leadership is to be held by man. This result is not necessarily surprising in light of the reading of 1 Cor. 11:2-16. There is an order to the way certain things are performed. Man has been given the leadership role in certain areas of life. Of course, this ‘leadership’ position is exemplified in the life of Christ, though this is not specifically mentioned in this scripture.

²⁴⁶ Witherington, Women in the Earliest Churches, 124.
²⁴⁷ Schreiner, “An Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:9-15,” 151.
Therefore, roles appear to be taught by Paul, although their 'value' is not weighed nor measured by the apostle.

The basis for Paul issuing this directive is, firstly, from the creation order, found in Gen. 2. Secondly, the deception that occurred to Eve in the garden by the serpent provides a further basis for restricting the teaching of the church to men. The text does not positively imply that the reason for this is a lack of education by the women nor the fact that women are actively teaching false teachings in the congregation, although these are speculated by scholars today. Because this is a one-way communication, the present day researcher does not know the entire story. In Paul's context, there may have been some immediate reason, like the ones mentioned, for writing this directive in this manner. However, the emphasis by Paul is clearly upon the fact that Eve was deceived, not Adam. A more natural reading of the text would have Paul claiming that this directive for a woman's role is based in the creation account. Value is not lessened nor heightened in Paul's mind set because roles exist. Instead, the distinctiveness and differences that exist between man and woman are accepted by Paul, and these differences affect the activities that occur in church. Although this certainly appears to stomp on many toes, it is a reading that has obvious merit from this text, although not from the social consciousness of contemporary society. Of course, the application of this passage to present day society is another topic altogether. And finally, women are encouraged to give attention to those elements that highlight their distinctiveness and their identity.
These scriptures present a picture of the society that Paul lived in. This picture does not coincide with the picture of present day society. Yet we must allow the text to say what it meant to the first century situations, and then struggle to bring the timeless principles to contemporary society. We must not try to ease our struggle with the application by infecting the text with meanings that are not found in solid biblical study. Although we should continue to stretch our understanding of the text by developing hypotheses and investigating these in the scholarly community, the replacement of the historical understanding of the text should require more certainty than what is found in some of the these analyses.

This thesis does not include the analysis of all the other scriptures that come to bear on this topic. Galatians 3:28, for example, is a text that needs to be evaluated in light of the results obtained by this study. Also, this paper does not deal with the application of these texts to modern day life. The principles that should come forward to today are a subject that deserves much consideration.

Other areas of investigation that have not been considered in this paper include the interaction of Jesus with women. Clearly his treatment of women as persons worthy of his time contrasted with that
of the Jewish leaders of his day. Jesus commended women's intelligence (John 4:7-30) and faith (Matt. 15:28). He used them in his parables and commended them in learning "at the Lord's feet" (Luke 10:39). They were among Jesus' traveling companions (Luke 8:1-3; Matt. 27:55). However, none of the twelve apostles were women. Also missing from this analysis is the consideration of a woman occupying the role of deaconess, fellow-worker, prophet and apostle, as some texts in the New Testament suggest.²⁴⁸

The focus of this paper is to come to grips with Paul's intended meaning in the three passages under consideration, aptly called the problem passages. What was the clear message that the recipients of 1 Corinthians and 1 Timothy perceived? What did Paul want his readers to understand? Has the cultural differences and sensitivities of our modern world influenced the interpretation of these passages?

The idea of roles in the relationship involving men and women appears to be present in these three scriptures. These roles are reflected in outward appearance and activity. The Corinthians were instructed to emphasize the differences between man and woman in worship. This instruction, which included the concept of man being a leader in the community relationship, had its foundation in the creation order. Likewise, the Ephesians were also given a directive based on the creation order that involved the relationship between man and woman. However, their directive not only called for the

²⁴⁸. It is critical to note that each of these designations are highly contested in the scholarly community as well as the local church.
leadership of the man, but also included the injunction for women to learn in submissiveness and not to teach a man. The Corinthians women, who were speaking in an inappropriate manner in church worship, were instructed by Paul to be silent so that the worship service would be orderly.

Are there any inconsistencies between these three scriptures? There does not appear to be any inconsistency that cannot be reasonably accounted for. The consistent teaching from these scriptures is the subordinate relationship that the woman has to man. What may appear to be inconsistent is the acceptance of a woman speaking in the worship in 1 Cor. 11:2-16 and the restriction placed upon her in 1 Cor. 14:34-35 and 1 Tim. 2:8-15. 1 Cor. 14:34-35 seems to be an instruction directed at a specific situation in which women were speaking improperly, and therefore, creating disruption and undermining Paul's main concern for the worship service, namely, the edification of the church.

The text of 1 Tim. 2:8-15 is more problematic. As noted earlier, the speech that Paul silenced in 1 Cor. 14:34-35 was improper in some fashion. The options are many, but ones that seem most apropos are either a constant asking of questions or improper participation in the judging of the prophecies. The teaching of 1 Tim. 2:8-15, as gleaned from the analysis above, calls for the women not to teach or have authority over men. Since the call is not for silence, there is no apparent conflict with 1 Cor. 11:2-16. One could deduce that the prayer and prophecy in 1 Cor. 11:2-16 did not involve the teaching of men. One could speculate quite easily that the teaching of men
referred to in 1 Tim. 2:8-15 was an authoritative type of teaching, not general edification that could be described by “praying and prophesying.” If the silence called for in 1 Cor. 14:34-35 was directed at women improperly discerning the prophecies, then one assumption that could be plausible is that the discernment of prophecy was regarded as a “teaching” role. If this was true, then the connection of these two scriptures would be complete, notwithstanding some further analysis, of course.

Assuming the above analysis is correct, then these scriptures certainly present a problem to women who desire to participate in church worship and leadership in the same manner that they are allowed to participate in vocational and social activities in our society. The research that went into producing this document found that many of the attacks upon the traditional reading of these scriptures resulted from logical arguments based on assumed positions of fairness, with a contemporary definition of fairness. With this as the beginning point, the goal was to discover how these scriptures actually confirm the hypothesis that they had developed. The beginning point assumed that these scriptures could not say what they seem to say, namely that women have a subordinate role to men in the church. Therefore the objective is clear, and the search is underway.

The careful analysis of these scriptures has discovered that there is not a perfect rendering of every minute aspect of these passages. Flaws do exist in each and every reading that has been investigated. Yet these flaws do not necessarily negate the reading of these texts simply because these flaws endure. Tensions exist
within the Bible that highlight human finiteness and the need for personal humility in many of the positions Christians choose. Yet reasonableness is within range of these scriptures. The fact that a few may object does not mean that the reading is questionable.

A sensible understanding of these scriptures has existed for hundreds of years. This traditional reading endured during times in which men "domineered" women, both in society and in the church. The fact that this "domineering" spirit was inappropriate does not mean that the scriptures have been totally misread. What has been misused is the idea that roles and authority are reasons for men to "domineer" in the church and home. Yet the "domineering" attitude is certainly not a quality taught by Jesus or Paul. Leadership is one of service and example, causing the leader to pour themselves out for the needs of others. The humility of Jesus means that you do not grasp for position, though it is yours to have, but you consider the needs of others in the way you pour out your life.

Assuming that the natural reading of the text was used to foster such inappropriate activities as "domineering" roles of authority does not invalidate the natural reading. The mistake is the manner in which many men have tried to assume their role as leader. Our culture is witnessing a revival in the appropriate way in which man should lead in the home, church, and the community. The Promise Keepers are examples of efforts by men to lead in service and example. It is worth noting that feminists are attacking these efforts are a threat to their mission. Yet our culture is certainly in dire need of homes that involve the presence of Christian husbands and wives.
Unfortunately, contemporary family life is becoming one parent affairs, usually without the delinquent father. Maybe a revival of the proper role of men and women in the home and church is one way the Christian community can continue to be salt and light in this world. What is definitely clear is that this world needs the salt of obedient lives serving others, and the light of the knowledge of Jesus who laid down his life because he loved his Father and his sheep as well.


Plutarch. Roman Questions 267a, LCL, 1936.


