

# Destin Church of Christ

## Fall, 2018

### Lessons from I & II Timothy and Titus

#### Lesson 4 – “*Roles in the Church: Women*”

*Texts:* I Tim 2:9-15

#### III. THE WOMAN OF GOD

Every significant movement within society will eventually, to some degree, make itself felt in the church. “Women’s liberation” is no exception. Some are suggesting that women can be elders, preachers, and leaders in public worship.

The dialogue, debate, and conflict that goes on over the issue of the role of women in the church has reached massive proportions. Books have been written by people who have for all their ministry been known as evangelicals, now denying the things they’ve always believed and affirming new truth regarding the role of women.

This effort is of Satan, who desires to use sinful human agents to attain his goals.

God has designed a place for man and a place for woman, in society, in the family, and in the church that is very clear in Scripture.

Women’s roles in the letters to Timothy and Titus appear troubling at best. There are references to old wives’ tales (1 Timothy 4:7), women “gadding about from house to house” (1 Timothy 5:13), and taken “captive” by those who spread a false faith (2 Timothy 3:6). They are admonished not to be gossips and drunks (Titus 2:3), not to live sensually (1 Timothy 5:6), and not to braid their hair or wear jewelry (1 Timothy 2:9).

According to these letters, women should love their husbands, bear children, manage their households (Titus 2:4-5; 1 Timothy 5:14), and remain silent, not teaching or exercising authority over men (1 Timothy 2:12). A statement apparently justified by the sins of Eve (2:13-14).

Certain women are given special, even honorable, positions: mothers and grandmothers (2 Timothy 1:5; 1 Timothy 5:2, 4), older women who instruct younger ones (Titus 2:3-5), “real” widows (1 Timothy 5:3, 16), old widows (1 Timothy 5:9-10), a woman who “has widows” (1 Timothy 5:16), and women associated with the role of deacon (1 Timothy 3:11).

The context of these letters can sharpen our perception of what they say about Women’s Roles in certain early Christian communities, and help us reflect on how those observations might bear on the present.

Some of the aspects specifically relevant to 1 Timothy 2:11-15 are:

1. The false teachers sowed dissension and were preoccupied with trivialities (1 Timothy 1:4-6; 6:4-5; cf. 2 Timothy 2:14, 16-17, 23-24; Titus 1:10; 3:9-11).
2. The false teachers stressed avoidance of all forms of indulgence as a means of spirituality. They taught abstinence from certain foods and from marriage (1 Timothy 4:1-3).
3. The false teachers had persuaded many women to follow them in their doctrines (1 Timothy 5:15; 2 Timothy 3:6-7).

4. The false teachers were encouraging women to discard traditional female roles in favor of a more equal rights approach to the role relationships of men and women.

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There are six features in regard to the role of women in the church that Paul deals with: (1) their Appearance, (2) their Attitude, (3) their Testimony, (4) their Role, (5) their Design, and (6) their Contribution.

#### 1. APPEARANCE

The word “adorn,” (*kosmeō*) has to do with how a woman prepares herself. It means “to arrange, to put in order, to make ready.”

Even though the NIV uses the expression “*expensive clothes*”, the original word is used in many places to mean; demeanor, attitude, or action. It’s not just clothing, but attitude.

In that particular culture, the woman who wanted to flaunt her wealth, flaunt her beauty, call attention to herself, attract everybody’s interest, and sexually allure someone, was the woman who was overdressed, over-made up, and over painted in every sense.

*“Modesty is an attitude of propriety and decency in dress, grooming, language, and behavior. If we are modest, we do not draw undue attention to ourselves.” – LDS.org*

A braid woven with a gold chain, or pearls, was a way of flaunting wealth. When your intent is to draw attention to yourself, you have violated the spirit of worship.

She should show by her dress and desire that she is in appearance and attitude that is obviously committed to worshipping the living God.

Ladies should wear clothes and jewelry in discretion, modesty, and humility, and fix their hair in such a way that it is not distracting.

#### 2. ATTITUDE

Self-control. The most desirable attitude of all from God’s view point would be humility. A woman with a proper attitude will dress in such a way as not to be alluring and not to be the source of temptation.

#### 3. TESTIMONY

Paul is very concerned about consistency in a woman’s testimony. When you claim to be a Christian, you are claiming to; worship, honor, adore, and serve God.

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#### 4. ROLE

Paul says to let the women learn. They were to be included in the learning opportunity. It is essential to their spiritual life and it is essential to their role in the plan of God.

They are to be silent, and subject. People who believe in women preachers take the word “silence” and say it means a “meek and quiet spirit”, and that when they do teach and preach, they should do so in a quiet spirited way.

“Silence” (*hēsuchia*) means silence. “Subjection” (“*hupotassō*”), means “to line up under”. Get in line in their proper place, not rebel, and not to be unruly.

In terms of spiritual life and blessing, men and women are equal. Throughout the Old Testament penalties given for sin were given equally for men or women.

To say they have a different role does not depreciate them and does not diminish their spirituality in any sense.

Nehemiah 7:67 - 245 men and women singing.

Exodus 38:8 - women served at the door.

Deuteronomy 12:10-12, 1 Samuel 1, 2 Samuel 6, and others.

There are no women kings and no women priests in the entire Old Testament. There is no record in the New Testament of a sermon being delivered by a woman, or any teaching given by a woman. All 66 books of the bible are written by men.

People today who want to advocate woman preachers want to say that there are several women mentioned as prophetess in the Old Testament. That is correct.

- Miriam - the sister of Moses. (Exodus 15:20); and Deborah (Judges 4:4) are two examples. God sometimes used a woman one time, to deliver one message, on one occasion. No woman in the Old Testament is seen in any public preaching or teaching ministry.
- What about the four daughters of Philip in Acts 21:9? It says they were virgins, who did prophesy, but it does not say they were prophets, evangelist, or elders. They prophesied, at some time, at someplace, for God's purpose.

There are times and places when women can speak the Word of God. That is different than being identified as a preacher, teacher, elder, evangelist, etc. Women may, in certain ways, even teach men. In conjunction with her husband, Priscilla was involved in teaching Apollos (Acts 18:26).

What Paul does not permit a woman to do is teach and usurp authority. Teach is the silence issue. Usurp authority is the subjection issue. He does not mean that in an appropriate place, a woman cannot pray a prayer, or ask a question in a proper spirit and a proper way. It does not mean that she cannot sing in worship. What it does mean is she is not to be the teacher and not rebel against the role of submission which God has designed for her in the life of the church.

In the right time and the right place, women can speak, but they cannot rise to leadership in the church so that they become the ones who dominate the church with their authority and their teaching.

“Can women pray if there are men there?” - Acts 1:12-15

Women can teach the Word of God to children and other women, they can speak out for the gospel on every occasion that they are given, they can contribute in a Sunday-school class, a Bible study, and in a home fellowship meeting. But, in the assembly of the church, women are not to teach and preach, and they are not to rule.

The Lord who gave them those gifts offers them ample opportunity to use those gifts without violating His standard design for their role in the church. There's plenty of room for her to exercise her gifts to the very fullest by God's intent.

Even in the church, there are women who are discontent with their God-given role and they seek to reach a place of prominence in teaching and taking authority over the man. Paul says, even though that is their desire, do not permit them to do that.

There is a time and a place where women are to be instructing others but it isn't to be in the public worship and service of the church. (Acts 18)

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## 5. DESIGN

Adam was made first, and then woman. First, *prōtos*, (“first in rank”, “chief”). In the Hebrew, he is “*ish*”, she is “*isha*”.

The Fall was the result of not only disobeying God's command not to eat, but the result of violating the divinely appointed role of the sexes, and woman acting independently of man. Woman assumed leadership, and man, instead of maintaining the leadership, acted in submission to the woman. So, subordination of women in the church wasn't invented by Paul, but rooted in the nature of the sexes and confirmed in the Fall.

Woman was deceived, and man subjected himself to her deception. The weakness of a woman is that she needs a head. The weakness of a man is he needs a woman. Men are not less defective than women.

There is no evidence to support that women are worse in interpreting Scripture. Throughout the history of the church, we see that male theologians have been just as deceived as female.

## 6. CONTRIBUTION

“You mean you're saved from sin for having babies?” The woman was deceived, and in the transgression, all women shall be saved in childbearing.

“What kind of saved do you mean here?” Not saved from sin, but women are delivered from the stigma of having caused the Fall of the race by childbearing.

Motherhood is woman's appointed role in general.

This is not to say that women cannot be saved unless they bear children. God doesn't want all women to be mothers; some of them He doesn't even want to be married. Some have the gift of singleness, and some He allows to be barren for His own purposes.

The pain of childbearing was the punishment for her sin. The result reminds her of God's restoring grace and puts her back in the place where she makes a positive contribution to the godliness of the next generation. She may, by being a mother who raises godly children, bring a generation to God. Paul is saying that a woman must accept her God-given role. If she continues in faith, love, holiness, self-control, and is godly, she can raise that godly seed.

Men, in the worship of the church, pray, preach, teach, and give leadership to the church, but the perfect balance of that is the influence of godly women that raised that godly generation.

The faith in the Lord, the sincere love for God, the holiness and purity of life, and the modest self-control of Godly Christian women, will raise the next generation. All these traits mark her spiritual state as such who will bring forth children who will bless the world. And as she brought forth once a curse, she now brings forth a blessing. That's her calling.

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Next week -- “Roles in the Church: Elders & Deacons”  
( I Tim 3:1-13; 5:17-20; Titus 1:5-9)