



1 Timothy - Chapter Two

Summary of Chapter Two

The first half of this chapter is given over to the requirement for corporate worship, including prayer for all people, especially those outside of the church with leadership authority over the people, for the aim is to see God's creation at peace and subject to good governance, while extending the Kingdom of God through the spread of the Gospel of grace. It has always been God's intention that all of mankind should receive an opportunity for salvation through the Gospel message, that is, by necessity, to be proclaimed to them.

Paul goes on to address behaviour by both men and women in the church gatherings. It seems that disputes were breaking out between the men over issues of doctrine and perhaps authority. Additionally, women were becoming more vociferous in their enquiry about the interpretation of prophecies and perhaps also the role of women in teaching, thus undermining the cultural norm of that era.

First of all, Paul encouraged cooperative behaviour among men in the worship service in relation to the specific task of prayer. He then instructed the women concerning appropriate dress and their behaviour in the worship setting with regard to teaching others.

III. 1 Timothy 2:1-3:13 - Descriptions of Gospel-Shaped Living

Having denounced the idle speculations of the false teachers, Paul turned to expounding in specific terms what true gospel living should look like; refer to 1 Timothy 1:5. He called for prayer and he addressed hindrances to prayer (1 Timothy 2:1-15), the required qualifications, characteristics and Spiritual gifts required by bishops, pastors or overseers (1 Timothy 3:1-7), and the similar qualifications for deacons (1 Timothy 3:8-13).

III.a 1 Timothy 2:1-15 - Instructions concerning Prayer

In describing life that properly emerges from the Gospel, Paul first mentioned prayer for the salvation of all people. This naturally leads to a discussion of godly

living and appropriate behaviour in corporate worship; particularly unity, modesty, and proper submission. All of these are functions of the local church that are actually part of the global church remit, for all are one body and there is but one church - the church of Jesus Christ.

¹ First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings should be made for everyone,

1 Timothy 2:1

Supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings. Paul's point was not to list all the ways to pray but to pile up various terms in reference to prayer for their cumulative impact. This was a call for all sorts of prayer, intended for all sorts of people across the globe and in all ages. It had always been accepted that the church would pray for its own: <<*Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints*>> (Ephesians 6:18). Here, Paul went on to remind Timothy that the church has a much wider role than that.

The phrase should be made for everyone indicates that the church in Ephesus was perhaps focusing its prayer life too much on those inside the church, a common phenomenon throughout the church age, where those inside the church have a tendency to forget that they were once on the outside too. Here, Paul does envision a prayer ministry, one that will be attentive to every aspect of the Gospel enterprise, from the initial planning and opening of doors for preaching: <<*At the same time pray for us as well that God will open to us a door for the word, that we may declare the mystery of Christ, for which I am in prison*>> (Colossians 4:3), to seed-sowing and boldness to preach: <<*Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel*>> (Ephesians 6:19), and to thanksgiving for changed lives: <<*We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labour of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ*>> (1 Thessalonians 1:2-3).

Two obvious conclusions may be drawn from this instruction. First, all believers have a necessary part to play in the church's worldwide mission. Second, each local gathering of believers is to participate directly and corporately in this work when coming together for worship.

² for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity.

1 Timothy 2:2

Kings and all who are in high positions are mentioned as examples of the <<*everyone*>> in v.1, for whom believers are to pray. The idea of praying for the king was not new to the Jews for it was something that had become part of their sacrificial system: <<*Whatever is needed – young bulls, rams, or sheep for burnt-offerings to the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, or oil, as the priests in Jerusalem require – let that be given to them day by day without fail, so*>>

that they may offer pleasing sacrifices to the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king and his children>> (Ezra 6:9-10). Praying for the wider state was something that God, through the prophet, had instructed the Diaspora Jews to undertake: *<<But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare>>* (Jeremiah 29:7).

These two ideas were brought into the New Testament church's thinking. It was considered not only prudent but proper for the church to respect state rulers and to submit to the institution of the state. The theological rationale for this obedience was the fact that the state and human government are a part of God's creative will: *<<Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God>>* (Romans 13:1), and: *<<For the Lord's sake accept the authority of every human institution, whether of the emperor as supreme, or of governors, as sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right>>* (1 Peter 2:13-14). However, from a more practical perspective, a submissive posture toward the state would lend the church credibility in the eyes of the world: *<<For it is God's will that by doing right you should silence the ignorance of the foolish>>* (1 Peter 2:15). The church was to express its submission by paying taxes: *<<Jesus said to them, 'Give to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's.' And they were utterly amazed at him>>* (Mark 12:17), and: *<<Pay to all what is due to them – taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honour to whom honour is due>>* (Romans 13:7), honouring the ruling authorities: *<<Honour everyone. Love the family of believers. Fear God. Honour the emperor>>* (1 Peter 2:17), and offering prayer for all those who had legitimate right to exert civil authority over the people in their region of responsibility, asking that they might do so according to God's will and not their own.

The lifestyle encouraged here, i.e. quiet, peaceable, godly and dignified, corresponds to the goal of apostolic teaching in: *<<But the aim of such instruction is love that comes from a pure heart, a good conscience, and sincere faith>>* (1 Timothy 1:5), and contrasts with the behaviour of the false teachers. This sort of living commends the Gospel, a theme that will recur throughout this letter in 1 Timothy 2:11, 3:7, 5:7, 5:14, and 6:1, as well as in 2 Timothy and Titus.

That this lifestyle is to be sought through prayer for the wider community, and particularly for those in authority, is not surprising as the ultimate aim is not a peaceful life but the extension of the Kingdom of God with the least possible hindrance from those in authority.

The church's prayer for all people is an essential aspect of its participation in the Great Commission. It is prayer that seeks the Gospel's penetration into all parts of the world and every aspect of life. The closely related prayer for those whom God has placed in charge of government finds its ultimate purpose too in the accomplishment of God's plan of salvation. Perhaps it is worth noting that Paul was not asking for prayer to ensure the liberation of the land from Roman rule, but for the responsible administration of that rule. The importance that

Paul attached to this facet of conduct in God's house suggests the need to rethink the place given to it in all corporate and small group gatherings.

Godliness is to live a life of worship to God that will bring honour and glory to his name; honesty requires good conduct to the rest of mankind, leading lives that reflect the love of God and the truth of the Gospel message of salvation for all. Above all, believers have to be honest with themselves if they are to grow in their discipleship and service to God.

To lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity does not mean that believers are not to speak out against issues that are contrary to the Gospel, such as matters of social justice. Nor should the church allow the state to dictate its policies and ministries just for the sake of peace and quiet! This concept has additional apostolic support: <<*For 'Those who desire life and desire to see good days, let them keep their tongues from evil and their lips from speaking deceit; let them turn away from evil and do good; let them seek peace and pursue it'*>> (1 Peter 3:10-11).

³ This is right and is acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour,
⁴ who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

1 Timothy 2:3-4

Evangelistic prayer for all people is rooted in the fact that God desires everyone to be saved, as he stated also through the prophet: <<*Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, says the Lord God, and not rather that they should turn from their ways and live?*>> (Ezekiel 18:23), <<*Say to them, As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?*>> (Ezekiel 33:11), and: <<*The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance*>> (2 Peter 3:9). It appears that Paul was countering an exclusivist tendency in the false teachers, or at least their downplaying of the importance of evangelising the Gentiles, along with their emphasis on the Jewish law. This statement figures prominently in theological disagreements over the extent of the atonement. It is clear that those who do not come to salvation do so through their own choosing: <<*Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!*>> (Matthew 23:37), and: <<*Yet you refuse to come to me to have life*>> (John 5:40). It was something that had been offered to God's people before they took possession of the Promised Land: <<*I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live*>> (Deuteronomy 30:19).

This passage cannot be read as suggesting that everyone will be saved, i.e. universalism, because the rest of the letter makes it clear that some will not be saved: <<*Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will renounce the faith by paying attention to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons*>>

(1 Timothy 4:1), <<*The sins of some people are conspicuous and precede them to judgement, while the sins of others follow them there*>> (1 Timothy 5:24), and: <<*For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains*>> (1 Timothy 6:10), which is confirmed by: <<*As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth*>> (Matthew 25:30), <<*Then he will say to those at his left hand, "You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels"*>> (Matthew 25:41), <<*And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life*>> (Matthew 25:46), and: <<*Then another angel, a third, followed them, crying with a loud voice, 'Those who worship the beast and its image, and receive a mark on their foreheads or on their hands, they will also drink the wine of God's wrath, poured unmixed into the cup of his anger, and they will be tormented with fire and sulphur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up for ever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and its image and for anyone who receives the mark of its name'*>> (Revelation 14:9-11).

Does this mean God desires something, everyone to be saved, that he cannot fulfil? Both Arminian and Calvinist theologians respond that God desires something more than universal salvation.

- Arminians hold that God's greater desire is to preserve genuine human freedom, which is necessary for genuine love, and therefore he must allow that some may choose to reject his offer of salvation.
- Calvinists hold that God's greater desire is to display the full range of his glory: <<*What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience the objects of wrath that are made for destruction; and what if he has done so in order to make known the riches of his glory for the objects of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory*>> (Romans 9:22-23), which results in election depending upon the freedom of his mercy and not upon human choice: <<*For he says to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.' So it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God who shows mercy. For the scripture says to Pharaoh, 'I have raised you up for the very purpose of showing my power in you, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.' So then he has mercy on whomsoever he chooses, and he hardens the heart of whomsoever he chooses*>> (Romans 9:15-18).

However one understands the extent of the atonement, this passage clearly teaches the free and universal offer of the Gospel to every single human being; desires shows that this offer is a bona fide expression of God's good will which, unlike that of man, is constant, unchanging and unchangeable in terms of external influence or human desire.

Come to the knowledge of the truth highlights the cognitive aspect of conversion, i.e. individuals must come to understand key truths in order to be converted.

The truth occurs twelve times in the Pastoral Epistles as a synonym for the Gospel. Here, it shows that it was always part of God's redemptive plan for the Gospel to be taken to all of mankind so that everyone has the opportunity of salvation. Since the only route to salvation is through the Gospel message of Christ and as the church is the holder of this message, then for the church to pray for all people is not optional, for it is intrinsic to the church's reason for existing and to the accomplishment of the larger evangelistic goal.

⁵ For

there is one God;

there is also one mediator between God and humankind,

Christ Jesus, himself human,

1 Timothy 2:5

For. Verses 5-6 provide the theological basis for the preceding statement that God wants all people to be saved.

There is only one God, therefore this God seeks everyone: <<*Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since God is one; and he will justify the circumcised on the ground of faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith*>> (Romans 3:29-30), and: <<*Now a mediator involves more than one party; but God is one*>> (Galatians 3:20). Various people groups do not each have their own gods, although they may imagine they do; all must come to the one true God for salvation. God's desire to reach all with the Gospel is a logical corollary of his unity.

The context of there being only one God was at the centre of Judaism: <<*Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone*>> (Deuteronomy 6:4), and continues to be fundamental to the Christian faith.

Paul draws on the oneness of God to demonstrate that all have access to God's salvation: the fact that there is one God of both Jews and Gentiles means salvation for the Gentiles too: <<*There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all*>> (Ephesians 4:4-6).

This means that Jesus, God's incarnate Son and Israel's Messiah, is the one and only mediator, the only way to salvation: <<*Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me*>> (John 14:6), and: <<*There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved*>> (Acts 4:12). Furthermore, this verse allows no place for intermediaries between people and Jesus, such as saints or human priests.

Paul's reference to the oneness of the mediator pins this universal access to the ministry of Christ. As the only mediator and Christ, Jesus stepped between God and sinful humankind to make it possible for a new covenant relationship to be established between mankind and God the Father. What he mediated was the new

covenant: <<*The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt – a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, ‘Know the Lord’, for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more*>> (Jeremiah 31:31-34), <<*But Jesus has now obtained a more excellent ministry, and to that degree he is the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted through better promises*>> (Hebrews 8:6), <<*For this reason he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, because a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions under the first covenant*>> (Hebrews 9:15), <<*and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel*>> (Hebrews 12:24).

Jesus paid the price for common salvation by dying in place of sinful mankind who deserved such a punishment, where the sinless Jesus did not. Therefore, he has bought the right to stand between God and humankind. His is undeserved grace and mercy, and something that did not exist before the Cross, as seen in: <<*There is no umpire between us, who might lay his hand on us both*>> (Job 9:33), although it was long ago foretold: <<*Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that was to be yours made careful search and inquiry, inquiring about the person or time that the Spirit of Christ within them indicated, when it testified in advance to the sufferings destined for Christ and the subsequent glory*>> (1 Peter 1:10-11).

Christ Jesus, himself human. Jesus was the Word of God, with which creation came into being: <<*In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light*>> (Genesis 1:1-3). This same Word is spoken of by John: <<*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it*>> (John 1:1-5), who goes on to say: <<*And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth*>> (John 1:14).

The final phrase, Christ Jesus, himself human, locates this mediating activity in his earthly ministry, which takes Paul on to the next stage of his logic.

- 6 who gave himself a ransom for all
– this was attested at the right time.

1 Timothy 2:6

Ransom, Greek *antilytron*, refers to purchasing someone's release and describes a common Pauline and NT understanding of Christ's work as redemptive: <<Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to set us free from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father>> (Galatians 1:3-4), <<For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me>> (Galatians 2:19-20), <<Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God>> (Ephesians 5:2), and related NT concepts of redemption: <<Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favourably on his people and redeemed them>> (Luke 1:68), <<At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem>> (Luke 2:38), <<But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place>> (Luke 24:21), <<He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds>> (Titus 2:14), <<But when Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation), he entered once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption>> (Hebrews 9:12), <<You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold>> (1 Peter 1:18), and **ransom**: <<It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave; just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many>> (Matthew 20:26-28), and: <<They sing a new song: 'You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slaughtered and by your blood you ransomed for God saints from every tribe and language and people and nation>> (Revelation 5:9).

It is worth reiterating Jesus' own words that reflect this language: <<For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many>> (Mark 10:45), using the Greek word *lytron* for **ransom**. Since Jesus **gave himself** as this **ransom**, the idea of substitution, dying on behalf of sinners, is also included. The concept comes from the fact that life without God is captivity to sin and its destructive forces which oppose a fruitful life. The **ransom** price releases those who are slaves to sin.

It should also be noted that Paul changed the phrase 'for many', as used by Jesus, to **for all** here, highlighting the inclusiveness of Christ's substitutionary death and resurrection. This is quite clear in Paul's theology: <<For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for

themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them>> (2 Corinthians 5:14-15).

Paul also clearly understood and accepted that Jesus' death was not some horrible accident or quirk of fate but was a key part of God's redemptive plan and conducted under his authority and according to his will: *<<No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father>>* (John 10:18), *<<You that are Israelites, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know – this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law>>* (Acts 2:22-23), *<<For in this city, in fact, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place>>* (Acts 4:27-28), and: *<<All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us>>* (2 Corinthians 5:18-19).

Attested at the right time. The coming of Jesus was not an arbitrary act but timed to perfection by God, as Paul explained: *<<Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person – though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation>>* (Romans 5:1-11). Mankind can be assured that his Second Coming will be timed with the same perfection.

⁷ For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

1 Timothy 2:7

Paul defended his mission to the Gentiles on the basis of God's desire that all should and could be saved (v.4). After all, it was God who announced his own plan by the giving of his Son for the benefit of all mankind. Paul was therefore both God's herald and Christ's apostle.

I am not lying. Paul knew that there were people determined to undermine the message he was proclaiming and would gladly perjure themselves in order to make Paul out to be the liar. An example of the campaign against him came when Paul took the churches' offerings to Jerusalem and met with James: <<*When they heard it, they praised God. Then they said to him, 'You see, brother, how many thousands of believers there are among the Jews, and they are all zealous for the law. They have been told about you that you teach all the Jews living among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, and that you tell them not to circumcise their children or observe the customs'*>> (Acts 21:21-22).

Paul was ordained as a teacher of the Gentiles by direct revelation from God, as well as through his servant Ananias: <<*But the Lord said to him, 'Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before Gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel; I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name'*>> (Acts 9:15-16). Despite the fruition of the promised suffering, Paul fulfilled God's will for him in faith and truth. He did so to the point of boasting in Christ about his office: <<*Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I glorify my ministry*>> (Romans 11:13), for: <<*In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to boast of my work for God*>> (Romans 15:17).

⁸ I desire, then, that in every place the men should pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or argument;

1 Timothy 2:8

In every place. Prayer, like praise and thanksgiving, should not be restricted to a certain day or in a certain place. Disciples are called to pray in the moment, whenever and wherever it is required. They should pray with expectancy and trust that God will do what is required: <<*But ask in faith, never doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind*>> (James 1:6).

The men should. Paul addressed particular concerns in regard to each gender. The issue for men was anger or arguments with others in the church; whether over matters of doctrine or leadership is not clear from the letter.

Then, or therefore, Greek *oun*, resumes the call to prayer from v.1, and the responsibility of the men in the church to ensure that it is effectively implemented and maintained.

Lifting up holy hands is a typical posture for prayer in the Bible: <<*Moses said to him, 'As soon as I have gone out of the city, I will stretch out my hands to the Lord; the thunder will cease, and there will be no more hail, so that you may know that the earth is the Lord's'*>> (Exodus 9:29), <<*Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands to heaven*>> (1 Kings 8:22), <<*Hear the voice of my supplication, as I cry to you for help, as I lift up my hands towards your most holy sanctuary*>> (Psalm 28:2), <<*So I will bless you as long as I live; I will lift up my hands and call on your name*>> (Psalm 63:4), <<*Lift up your hands to the holy place, and bless the Lord*>> (Psalm 134:2), <<*Let my prayer be counted as*

incense before you, and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice>> (Psalm 141:2), <<*When you stretch out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood*>> (Isaiah 1:15), and: <<*Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them*>> (Luke 24:50); he being Jesus.

Lifting up holy hands is also a metaphor for having a pure heart when coming before God in prayer, praise and worship. This is called for by James: <<*Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded*>> (James 4:8). It is also essential for believers to know and understand that corporate prayer and praise can only be acceptable from those who are in a right relationship with one another and with God: <<*So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift*>> (Matthew 5:23-24), <<*And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one. For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses*>> (Matthew 6:12-15), <<*You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures*>> (James 4:3), and: <<*Husbands, in the same way, show consideration for your wives in your life together, paying honour to the woman as the weaker sex, since they too are also heirs of the gracious gift of life – so that nothing may hinder your prayers*>> (1 Peter 3:7). Interpersonal harmony is a resource of incalculable value for the prayer life of the church.

By taking up the issues of vv.8-15 immediately following vv.1-7, Paul suggested that the way the church conducts itself in corporate worship, i.e. unity, modesty, and full, proper submission, bears significantly on its effectiveness in world evangelisation.

⁹ also that the women should dress themselves modestly and decently in suitable clothing, not with their hair braided, or with gold, pearls, or expensive clothes, ¹⁰ but with good works, as is proper for women who profess reverence for God.

1 Timothy 2:9-10

Also that the women. For women it is modesty and proper submission, for their appearance should be that which is appreciated and approved of by their husbands.

Not with their hair braided, or with gold, pearls or expensive clothes. Paul was not prohibiting the wearing of jewellery; the principle was that women should not dress ostentatiously or seductively, but in a way that was proper. The apostle Peter concurred: <<*Do not adorn yourselves outwardly by braiding your hair, and by wearing gold ornaments or fine clothing; rather, let your adornment be the inner self with the lasting beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in God's sight*>> (1 Peter 3:3-4). Such external adorning can be witnessed in portraits and sculptures from the 1st Century, where the elaborate

braiding of women's hair and the wearing of ostentatious jewellery was common in upper-class Roman society. In contrast to this, the Christian woman should focus on inner, hidden beauty of the heart, and the good works she performed in her community. What matters to God is the godly character of the wife, characterised by a gentle and quiet spirit. It is clear that neither Peter nor Paul were literally prohibiting all braiding of hair or all wearing of gold jewellery, because if this were the case the same prohibition would apply also to wearing clothing! Instead, both apostles warned against an inordinate preoccupation with personal appearance and material excess in such matters.

There are some who say this is speaking out against women dressing in an overtly sexual manner that would distract the men from their worship. However, it seems that Paul would also have had in mind the upset and offence that can be caused to the poor by those who so overtly display their wealth through their display of fine jewellery, etc. Middle class churches can often make a poorer newcomer, or even an established poorer member of the church, feel excluded from 'the club'.

With good works continues the emphasis on the proper result of true doctrine, which produces good works, for it is the invisible force behind the good works, i.e. love for others, that creates and sustains unity, and has a greater impact on those outside the church than any display of wealth could ever achieve. Refer also to comments made on 1 Timothy 1:5.

¹¹ Let a woman learn in silence with full submission.

1 Timothy 2:11

Women were not permitted to teach men in the church but were required to submit and defer to male leadership, especially that of their husband.

According to some commentators, in silence refers apparently to the habit of some women who would chatter during gatherings rather than listening to the leaders speaking. It did not prohibit the women from joining in with the corporate worship or even exercising the Spiritual gifts of tongues or prophesying. Others will argue it refers to the role of teaching men, as will also be noted later. In most synagogues, women had their own area and often met separately to the men. With men and women now mixing freely in one gathering, it seems as though some tensions were coming to the surface. Jewish women may have been taught by a Rabbi but it was permissible for a woman to teach other women: <<*Likewise, tell the older women to be reverent in behaviour, not to be slanderers or slaves to drink; they are to teach what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children*>> (Titus 2:3-4), and children: <<*I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you*>> (2 Timothy 1:5), especially in the home setting. Paul continued to encourage this method for women in the church.

¹² I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she is to keep silent.

1 Timothy 2:12

I permit no woman. Some commentators would argue that Paul self-consciously writes with the authority of an apostle: <<**Finally, brothers and sisters, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus that, as you learned from us how you ought to live and to please God (as, in fact, you are doing), you should do so more and more**>> (1 Thessalonians 4:1), and: <<**Now we command you, beloved, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to keep away from believers who are living in idleness and not according to the tradition that they received from us**>> (2 Thessalonians 3:6), rather than simply offering an opinion. Others would argue that he is speaking personally and culturally, for Scripture does not indicate that Jesus ever expressed such an opinion. If the first point is correct then the instruction is global and timeless; if the second point is intended then the instruction was local and has expired.

If this statement was given in the context of Paul's apostolic instructions to the church for the ordering of church practice when the church is assembled together, then, in that context, two things were prohibited:

1. Women are not permitted to publicly teach Scripture and/or Christian doctrine to men in church, for the context implies these topics.
2. Women are not permitted to exercise authority over men in church. The reference for both teaching and exercise authority here is within the context of the assembled church. Women teaching other women, and women teaching children, are not in view here, and both are encouraged elsewhere, as previously discussed.

This passage does not have in view the role of women in leadership situations outside the church, e.g. business or government. The presence of the word or, Greek *oude*, between to teach and to exercise authority indicates that two different activities are in view, not a single activity of authoritative teaching.

Exercise authority represents the Greek *authenteō*, found only here in the NT. It is used in place of the normally accepted word *exousia* and some claim it means usurp or abuse authority. Over 80 examples of this word exist outside of the NT, however, clearly establishing that the meaning is exercise authority, and not usurp authority or abuse authority, etc, as sometimes has been argued. Since the role of pastor/elder/overseer is rooted in the task of teaching and exercising authority over the church, this verse would also exclude women from serving in this office: <<**Now a bishop must be above reproach, married only once, temperate, sensible, respectable, hospitable, an apt teacher**>> (1 Timothy 3:2). Thus when Paul called for the women to keep silent, he meant silent with respect to the teaching responsibility that is limited in the assembled church. Paul elsewhere indicated that women should speak in other ways in the church assembly, as indicated by: <<**Any man who prays or prophesies with something on his head disgraces his head, but any woman who prays or prophesies with her head unveiled disgraces her head – it is one and the same thing as having her head shaved**>> (1 Corinthians 11:5). Paul also wrote: <<**As in all the churches of the saints, women should be silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as the law also says. If there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful**

for a woman to speak in church>> (1 Corinthians 14:33a-35). Since Paul seemed to permit wives to pray and prophesy as long as they did not dishonour their husbands by the way they dressed (v.9), it is difficult to see this as an absolute prohibition. Paul was likely forbidding women to speak up and judge prophecies, since such an activity would subvert male headship. It is also interesting to note that, in the letter to Corinth, Paul refers to the law as the authority for his assertions, probably referring to the Mosaic Law and therefore his Pharisaic background!

¹³ For Adam was formed first, then Eve;

1 Timothy 2:13

For introduces the biblical basis for the prohibition of v.12. Paul indicated that the prohibition is based on two grounds, the first being the order of creation, Adam was formed first, and the second being the deception of Eve (v.14).

Formed, the Greek *plassō*, is the same term that the Septuagint uses in: <<*then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed*>> (Genesis 2:7-8), which clearly referred to creation, as does: <<*Indeed, man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for the sake of woman, but woman for the sake of man*>> (1 Corinthians 11:8-9). Paul's argument indicated that gender roles in the church are not simply the result of The Fall but are rooted in creation and therefore apply to all cultures at all times. The meaning of this passage, however, is widely contested today.

Some interpreters argue that the prohibition of v.12 does not apply today because:

1. The reason for Paul's command was that women were teaching false doctrine in Ephesus.
2. Paul said this because women in that culture were not educated enough to teach.
3. This was a temporary command for that culture only.

However, Paul's appeal to the creation of Adam and Eve argues against those explanations. In addition, the only false teachers named in connection with Ephesus were men: <<*I am giving you these instructions, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies made earlier about you, so that by following them you may fight the good fight, having faith and a good conscience. By rejecting conscience, certain persons have suffered shipwreck in the faith; among them are Hymenæus and Alexander, whom I have turned over to Satan, so that they may learn not to blaspheme*>> (1 Timothy 1:18-20), <<*Avoid profane chatter, for it will lead people into more and more impiety, and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenæus and Philetus, who have swerved from the truth by claiming that the resurrection has already taken place. They are upsetting the faith of some*>> (2 Timothy 2:17-18), and: <<*Some even from your own group will come distorting the truth in order to*

entice the disciples to follow them>> (Acts 20:30), which was spoken probably to an all male group of church leaders from Ephesus. No historical evidence exists of women teaching false doctrine in 1st Century Ephesus. Moreover, ancient inscriptions and literature speak of a number of well-educated women in that area of Asia Minor at that time, especially those educated in the Scriptures: <<Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, 'Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me.' But the Lord answered her, 'Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her'>> (Luke 10:38-42), <<Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?' She said to him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world'>> (John 11:21-27), speaking of a man named Apollos in Ephesus: <<He began to speak boldly in the synagogue; but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained the Way of God to him more accurately>> (Acts 18:26); or were independently wealthy: <<Soon afterwards he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. The twelve were with him, as well as some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, and Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their resources>> (Luke 8:1-3), and: <<A certain woman named Lydia, a worshipper of God, was listening to us; she was from the city of Thyatira and a dealer in purple cloth. The Lord opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul. When she and her household were baptised, she urged us, saying, 'If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my home.' And she prevailed upon us>> (Acts 16:14-15).

Finally, some have claimed that this passage only prohibits a wife from teaching or exercising authority over her husband, since the Greek words *gynē* and *anēr*, translated woman and man in v.12, can also mean wife and husband in certain contexts. Given the immediate context of vv.8-9, however, the most likely meaning of the Greek words *gynē* and *anēr* here in vv.11-14 would seem to be woman and man, rather than wife and husband.

¹⁴ and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.

1 Timothy 2:14

Adam was not deceived, but the woman was provided Paul's second reason (v.13). Although Eve sinned first as a result of being deceived, Adam's sin was conscious and wilful, for he had received the command from God directly, as well as perhaps being negligent for had he not instructed his wife properly. The result had devastating consequences for the whole human race: <<*Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned – sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law*>> (Romans 5:12-13). It appears that God saw it that way too for his curse was more severe against the man's actions than the woman's: <<*To the woman he said, 'I will greatly increase your pangs in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.'* And to the man he said, 'Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree about which I commanded you, "You shall not eat of it", cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return'>> (Genesis 3:16-19).

¹⁵ Yet she will be saved through childbearing, provided they continue in faith and love and holiness, with modesty.

1 Timothy 2:15

This is a notoriously difficult-to-understand verse. Paul clearly does not believe people can be saved in the sense of earning justification through childbearing or any other means: <<*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God – not the result of works, so that no one may boast*>> (Ephesians 2:8-9). Although the NT can also use the term saved, Greek *sōzō*, in the sense of progressively coming to experience all the aspects of salvation. In that sense, salvation is ongoing.

Ultimately, all people live because of their mother's childbearing, and salvation came through one woman's particular childbearing: <<*Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel*>> (Isaiah 7:4 NASB), <<*For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace*>> (Isaiah 9:6), and: <<*The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end'. Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?'*>> (Luke 1:30-34).

A similar view is that saved can be understood as referring especially to the endurance and perseverance in faith that is necessary for eternal salvation:

<<Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved>> (Matthew 10:22), and: <<But anyone who endures to the end will be saved>> (Matthew 24:13). People are saved as they persevere, i.e. continue in the faith to carry out the Lord's calling in their life, one example being the unique role of women in childbearing.

The change from singular she to plural they is a literal rendering of the Greek text, and does not appear to have any significant contextual interpretation.

The whole debate over male-female relationships in Paul's teaching is complex and many factors are to be considered. It is often helpful to take this issue alongside similar issues that were in place in the 1st Century, that is, slavery and racial discrimination. The church immediately started to address the issue of racial discrimination by being open to all, although sadly throughout history there were many who claimed to be Christians who have discriminated against others of different colour, race or religion, or who actively engaged in the slave trade, particularly the taking of Africans across the Atlantic.

The early church did not make any attempt to abolish slavery for that may have brought it into conflict with the world at large, causing real problems of acceptance and turning people away from the faith in doing so. Similarly, to immediately break the accepted relationship between males and females, particularly that between husband and wife, could have been similarly divisive. All three of these issues have been a work in progress throughout the church age, although it could be said that not a lot of progress has been made in some parts of the global church on each or indeed all of these issues.

Paul certainly advocated free association between Jew and Gentile, he sought reconciliation and right relationships between slave and master, and he taught on harmony between the sexes, freely acknowledging the role of women in his own ministry, going so far as to write: <<There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus>> (Galatians 3:28). Much of this could also be taken as part of the now but not yet of the Kingdom.

There is also the debate that the emancipation of women was taught by the false teachers due to their misunderstanding of the resurrection promises, again part of the now but not yet of the Kingdom. These considerations provide a framework within which to explore the meaning and intent of the instructions to women. However, the complexity of the whole issue and the range of texts involved suggest that we should think in terms of possibilities rather than certainty at several points.

Whichever viewpoint an individual may take on this issue, Paul's overall teaching is clear: the church needs to be united in love, faithful in their prayer and worship to God, and living a sacrificial life in faith of the promises to come. Those who abide by the Gospel truth, accepting and complying with God's will for their lives, will be assured of the eternal salvation that is offered through the Gospel.