

## Exegetical Outline:

1. Background and purpose.
  - a. Written to Timothy as an apostolic representative (1:3; 4:11-16).
  - b. Written in reference to particular teaching issues within the church (1:6-7; 4:1-3).
  - c. Written to give instruction for specific church conduct (3:14-15).
2. Near context (2:8-10).
  - a. Instructions regarding conduct of men **in community** (2:8, cf. 1:18 and 2:1 “this command...therefore I urge...”).
    - i. “In every place” may very well refer to in every place where there is a church or in every place where believers were meeting in Ephesus.
    - ii. Pray without anger.
    - iii. Pray without dissension or quarreling (note similarity between **διαλογισμός** “quarreling” and **λογομαχέω** “wrangle about words” in 2 Timothy 2:14).
  - b. Instructions regarding conduct of women in community (2:9-10).
    - i. Do not dress provocatively.
    - ii. Conduct yourselves in keeping with godliness.
    - iii. Strong indication that attire and especially provocative dress were used as a statement of rebellion or independence.

Obviously, both issues concern conduct in general, but Paul’s focus is on the church community in particular.

3. Immediate instructions regarding women in respect to leadership in the community/church (2:11-14).

- a. Women are to devote themselves to learning or receiving instruction.
  - i. To which women does this apply?
    1. Noun is singular (woman).
    2. Noun is without the article (“a” woman)
    3. Verb “to learn” is present tense. This could be gnomic (a principle).
    4. Paul connects this instruction to the creation account in v 14.
  - ii. What are they to learn?
    1. Paul is writing about what is to take place within the context of the church community (3:14-15).
    2. The content of teaching referenced throughout this letter is primarily instruction in sound gospel doctrine (1:10; 2:7; 4:6, 11, 13, 16, 5:17; 6:1, 2, 3).
    3. This is also true of the other Pastoral Epistles (2 Tim. 1:11; 2:2; 3:10; 3:16; Titus 1:9; 2:1, etc.).
  - iii. From whom are they to learn?
    1. Again, Paul is writing about what is to take place within the context of the church community (3:14-15).
    2. The immediate context makes clear that elders are to teach (3:2).
    3. The near context makes clear that teaching is a key role of elders (5:17).
    4. The subject of the letter is false teachers in the church.
    5. The content of 2 Timothy and Titus make clear that teaching is a primary responsibility of elders.
    6. Acts 6 both separates the responsibility of teaching from others in the church and elevates the importance of teaching.
    7. James 3:1 indicates an office that involves teaching.
- Paul’s command is a universal principle relevant to all women in the church.
- Paul is instructing women to devote themselves to apostolic instruction, the kind of instruction that Paul expects Timothy and church leaders to give and guard.
- Paul is commanding women to learn from the properly qualified elders of their church.

- iv. How are they to receive instruction?
  1. In an attitude of quietness (meaning of ἡσυχία cf. 2:2; 2 Thess. 3:12).
  2. In an attitude of submission (note “all”, cf. 3:4; Gal. 2:5).
  3. 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 says, “Let the women keep silent in the churches...” is a similar admonition.
- Women should strive to maintain a genuinely submissiveness heart attitude that allows them to learn without argument or contention but with joy.
  - b. Women are not to teach or exercise authority over men.
    - i. What does it mean to teach?
      1. Teaching is the flipside of receiving instruction (cf. v11).
      2. As noted, uses of the verb overwhelmingly refer to positive instruction.
      3. As noted, teaching is a distinctive function of elders (3:2, note the absence in deacon qualifications; 5:17; Titus 1:9-11).
      4. The content of instruction is Scripture/Apostolic teaching (1:10; 2:7; 4:6, 11, 13, 16, 5:17; 6:1, 2, 3 cf. 2 Tim. 3:16-4:2).
    - Paul had in mind the positive instruction of those charged with the responsibility to advance and guard sound gospel doctrine within the context of the church.
      - ii. What does it mean to exercise authority?
        1. Only occurrence of this word in NT and rare in Greek literature.
        2. Lexical options:
          - a. Exercise authority
          - b. Domineer
          - c. Context must dictate.
        3. It is strongly associated with “to teach” by “neither” (οὐδέ).
          - a. Infinitives connected in this grammatical structure always mirror each other (i.e. negative/negative or positive/positive).
          - b. Teaching is positive; therefore, exercise authority must be positive.
        4. Near context is elders with authority:
          - a. Overseers in 3:1, 2.
          - b. Managers in 3:4, 5.
          - c. Ruling in 5:17.
        5. Titus clearly had authority “These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you” (2:15).
        6. Hebrews 13:17 gives leaders in the church an authority that the congregation is commanded to obey.
      - Paul had in mind the positive authority or leadership of elders/overseers or an authority that would rightly fall to the elders of the church.
        - iii. What is the relationship between teaching and exercising authority?
          1. Not likely to function as one idea only (i.e. “authoritative teaching”).
            - a. Too much separation between ideas.
            - b. Doesn’t honor what seems to be parallelism between receiving instruction and submission in v11.
            - c. Creates an untenable distinction between simple teaching and authoritative teaching.
            - d. Does not acknowledge the clear distinction between these roles in 5:17.
          2. Though not one idea, there is likely a strong connection.
            - a. Note the strong coordinating conjunction “neither”.
            - b. The phrase “over a man” most likely goes with both infinitives.

- c. There seems to be parallelism with v11.
  - d. Teaching and exercise of authority are distinctive roles of the one office of elder.
  - e. Paul's use of the "trustworthy saying" phrase links this to the qualifications of elders.
    - i. All other uses of this phrase connect with what precedes (cf. 1:15; 4:9; 2 Tim 2:11).
    - ii. There is no reason to disconnect 3:1 from what precedes.
- Paul had in mind the dual responsibilities of teaching and the exercise of authority as the key distinctive functions of elders/overseers.
  - iv. What men should women not teach or lead?
    1. The noun is singular "man".
    2. The noun is without the article, "a" man.
    3. The context is conduct within the church (3:15).
    4. The instruction and authority are related to the office of elder.
    5. "Man" in verse 8 cannot refer only to husbands.
- Women are prohibited from teaching/exercising authority over men within the context of the church.
 

*[It would seem reasonable to define a "man" as one who has taken his place as a full member of the covenant community/the church.]*

  - c. The reasons for the prohibition are grounded in creation order and the fall and are timeless.
    - i. V13 clearly gives the reason for the prohibition (i.e. "because").
    - ii. Adam was created first (v13)
      1. This is clearly a reference to Genesis 2.
      2. Paul makes this same basic argument in 1 Cor. 11:8 in reference to the headship of men.
      3. Pre-fall creation order is timeless (i.e. not cultural).
      4. We do not have to fully understand the mind of God in this matter in order to accept it as true and good.
    - iii. Eve was deceived; Adam was not (v14).
      1. Paul is clearly referring to Genesis 3 (cf. 3:13).
      2. Eve took the initiative and led her husband.
      3. This is stated as an historical fact that transcends later cultures.
      4. Timothy issue is deceptive teaching.
      5. Women were being led astray (cf. 5:13; 2 Tim. 3:6).
- Paul's prohibition is timeless and not restricted to the Ephesian church or to first century culture.

#### 4. Conclusions:

- a. In His infinite wisdom, God has prohibited women from both the office and primary functions of elders within the context of the church community.
  - i. This means that women should not be elders/pastors.
  - ii. This means that women should not teach as elders or pastors would.
  - iii. This means that women should not exercise leadership authority as elders or pastors would.
  - iv. This would include the public assembly of the church but would also include those shepherding responsibilities that distinctively attach to the office of elder.
- b. This command is a universal, timeless prohibition that applies to women within the context of the church community until Christ returns.
- c. Because women are equally children of God and co-heirs of Christ and gifted members of the community, no other prohibitions should be laid upon them in respect to the conduct of the church community. To do so would be to dishonor Christ who is the head of the Church.
- d. All men and women who serve Christ within the context of the community are to do so in an attitude of submission to Christ first but also to the properly appointed leaders (Hebrews 13:17).
- e. Paul's command should not lead to an arrogance among men or a devaluing of women who stand before Christ as co-heirs, and we ought to strive together to hold one another up and spur each other on in our shared gospel identity.