

# Abounding Grace Christian Church

## A Study of Paul's First Letter to Timothy – Part 7

### I. Exposition of Chapter Two (Continued).

A. **Verse 12 (continued)** - **“And I do not permit a woman to teach or have authority over a man, but to be in silence.”** – Last time we dealt with women and teaching, now we want to address the issue of a woman not having **“authority”** over a man. This is the only place where this Greek word (*authenteō*) is used in the New Testament. This word means; **“to control in a domineering manner”**<sup>1</sup> Just as with the issue of teaching, this is probably addressing a problem with a particular woman (or, group of women) in Ephesus. Dr. Eddie Hyatt writes:

**“So why does Paul use this strange Greek verb? The evidence indicates that there was a radical matriarchal movement in the church in Ephesus, actually rooted in the worship of Artemis. The erring leaders proclaimed Eve (woman) to be the author or originator of Adam (man), giving primacy to the female as was done in the worship of the mother goddess.”**<sup>2</sup>

B. **Verses 13-14** – **“For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.”** – In the context, Paul is giving two reasons why these women should not teach or have authority over a man (**verse 12**).

1. **“For Adam was formed first...”** – (cf. **Genesis 2:7-8**). The word **“formed”** means; **“to fashion or form an object.”**<sup>3</sup> It can also be defined as; **“to form, mould (something from clay, wax, etc.); used of a potter.”**<sup>4</sup> In **Genesis 1:26-27**, we see that God made both man and woman in His image. The word **“image”** means; **illusion, resemblance; hence a representative figure**<sup>5</sup> From this we see that both men and women were meant to be representatives of God, equally. Also, we can see that this is a correction of the false doctrine of Eve being the author or originator of Adam as stated above. Regarding **Genesis 2:18** which reads; **“And the LORD God said, ‘It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.’”**, Dr. Craig Keener makes states:

**“The Genesis account, taken on its own terms, does not subordinate Eve because she was created second; it makes her an equal part of Adam— her creation was necessary for him to be complete. The Hebrew phrase ‘helper suitable for him,’ as is well known, denotes a role of strength (‘helper’ usually refers to God in the Hebrew Bible), and ‘suitable’ may mean ‘corresponding to’ or ‘equal to’ (so that the woman is not viewed as a superior helper like God, nor as an unmatched creation like the animals).”**<sup>6</sup>

2. **“...And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.”**

a. **“...Adam was not deceived...”** – This is the first time the word **“deceived”** is found in this letter, though we know that Paul has been dealing with the deception of false teachers at different points of this letter already (cf. **1:3-11; 18-20**). The word **“deceived”** means; **“to cause someone to have misleading or erroneous views concerning the truth”**<sup>7</sup> In other words, Adam was not fooled by Satan. He knew exactly what he was doing when he partook of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (**Genesis 2:16-17**). Adam is the one responsible for the fall due to his deliberate disobedience. Paul writes in **Romans 5:12**:

**“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—”**

b. **“...but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.”** – (cf. **Genesis 3:1-6**). This is not to suggest that women are more prone to being deceived than men are. Dr. Craig Keener makes the following suggestion as a possibility of what Paul was attempting to convey:

**“...Paul intends to connect Eve’s later creation to why she was deceived: she was not present when God gave the commandment, and thus was dependent on Adam for the teaching. In other words, she was inadequately educated—like the women in the Ephesian church.”**<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 473.

<sup>2</sup> Eddie L. Hyatt, *Paul, Women and Church*, (Grapevine, TX: Hyatt Press, 2016)

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 513.

<sup>4</sup> Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Being Grimm’s Wilke’s Clavis Novi Testamenti* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House., 1977)

<sup>5</sup> James Strong, *A Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Greek Testament and The Hebrew Bible* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2009), 99.

<sup>6</sup> Craig S. Keener, *Paul, Women and Wives: Marriage and Women’s Ministry in the Letters of Paul* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1992).

<sup>7</sup> Louw and Nida, 366.

<sup>8</sup> Craig S. Keener, *Paul, Women and Wives: Marriage and Women’s Ministry in the Letters of Paul*

C. Verse 15 – “Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.” – Many scholars consider this verse to be, perhaps, the most difficult to interpret of any of Paul’s writings.

1. **“Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing...”** – The Bible teaches that pain in childbirth was one of the curses that befell women due to the fall of humanity (**Genesis 3:16**). Though there are many different views pertaining to what this verse means, it seems the best way to understand it is to simply take it for what it says. First, the word **“saved” (Gr. *sozo*)**, is the common word used when referring to be saved from sin. Depending on the context, it means; **“to save, rescue; to preserve safe and unharmed, to cure, heal, restore to health to deliver from, set free from.”**<sup>9</sup> Again, appealing to Dr. Craig Keener, he writes:

**“...this verse refers to women being ‘brought safely through’ childbirth. ‘Saved’ means ‘delivered’ or ‘brought safely through’ more often in ancient literature than it means ‘saved from sin.’ It is true that Paul nowhere else uses ‘saved’ to mean ‘saved in childbirth,’ but it should be kept in mind that Paul nowhere else speaks of coming safely through childbirth. The most natural way for an ancient reader to have understood ‘salvation’ in the context of childbirth would have been a safe delivery, for women regularly called upon patron deities (such as Artemis or Isis) in childbirth.”**<sup>10</sup>

2. **“...if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.”** – Like any of God’s promises, there are conditions. The deliverance or, **“brought safely through”** childbirth is contingent upon woman continuing in faith in Jesus Christ, trusting in Him and keeping the command of love. Also **“holiness”**, which means maintaining a purity, and self-control which means, in this context, **“female modesty.”**<sup>11</sup>

## II. Exposition of Chapter Three.

A. Verse 1 – **“This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.”** – With this verse, the Apostle Paul begins to give instructions concerning leadership in the Church. As we’ve seen, he has just warned about women teaching until they are more qualified. Now, it seems he wants to make sure it’s understood that not just any man is qualified either.

1. **“This is a faithful saying...”** – This is the second time Paul uses this phrase (**cf. 1:15**). He’s saying that what he’s about to say can be trusted, it is a true saying. It was possibly used in order to get people’s attention as to what was about to be said.
2. **“...If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.”** – The word **“bishop”** is the Greek word, *episkopos*. Ralph Earle writes: **“The word *episcopos* is made up of *epi*, ‘upon’ or ‘over,’ and *scopos*, ‘watcher.’ So it literally means ‘one who watches over.’”**<sup>12</sup> For a better understanding of this, Warren Wiersbe writes:

**“According to the New Testament, the terms ‘bishop,’ ‘pastor,’ and ‘elder’ are synonymous. *Bishop* means ‘overseer,’ and the elders had the responsibility of overseeing the work of the church (Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Peter 5:1–3). ‘Elder’ is the translation of the Greek word *presbutes*, which means ‘an old man.’ Paul used the word *presbytery* in 1 Timothy 4:14, referring not to a denomination, but to the ‘eldership’ of the assembly that ordained Timothy. Elders and bishops (two names for the same office, Titus 1:5, 7) were mature people with spiritual wisdom and experience. Finally, ‘pastor’ means ‘shepherd,’ one who leads and cares for the flock of God.”**<sup>13</sup>

B. Verse 2 – **“A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach;”**

1. **“blameless”** – **“pertaining to what cannot be criticized”**<sup>14</sup>
2. **“the husband of one wife”** – There are many ideas as to what this refers to. It’s not referring to polygamy because that was rare in those days. It could refer to never having been divorced but that seems to imply that divorce is not forgivable. It seems to me the most Biblically consistent view is that of being a **“one woman man”**, in other words, faithful to one’s wife.

**“If this interpretation is correct, divorced (and remarried) men would not automatically be excluded from serving as overseers or deacons, especially if the divorce was biblically legitimate (i.e., by reason of a wife’s marital unfaithfulness [Mt 19:9], desertion by an unbelieving wife [1Co 7:15–16], and/or remarriage owing to the death of a spouse [Ro 7:2–3]). This would also be true if the divorce has taken place in the distant past (esp. if the person was not a believer at the time) and if the man’s present pattern (and proven track record) is that of marital faithfulness.”**<sup>15</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Mounce Concise Greek-English Dictionary, William D. Mounce and Rick D. Bennett, Jr. (e-sword version 1993).

<sup>10</sup> Craig S. Keener, *Paul, Women and Wives: Marriage and Women’s Ministry in the Letters of Paul*.

<sup>11</sup> Mounce Concise Greek-English Dictionary, William D. Mounce and Rick D. Bennett, Jr. (e-sword version 1993).

<sup>12</sup> Ralph Earle, *Word Meanings of the New Testament*, (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1986)

<sup>13</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 219.

<sup>14</sup> Louw and Nida, 435.

<sup>15</sup> *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Andreas Köstenberger, (Zondervan Publishing, 2006)

3. "temperate" –
4. "sober-minded" –
5. "good behavior" –
6. "hospitable" –
7. "able to teach" -