

## BIBLICAL STUDY PAPER: 1 TIMOTHY 2:8-15

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### The Context of the Passage

The Passage under review is part of a series of instructions that Paul is urging upon Timothy who is resident in Ephesus. Paul expects to come to Ephesus soon (1 Timothy 3:15, 4:13) yet he uses the occasion of writing to Timothy to give certain instructions with respect to the proper behaviour of the household of God (1 Timothy 3:15). It would appear from the opening chapter of this epistle that there were certain false teachers either in the congregation or certainly in the environs of the church (1 Timothy 1:3ff, 4:7). The exact nature of the doctrine that these people were teaching is not clear. Some have speculated on the influence of Judaisers, others have suggested gnostic teaching. Some even suggest (denying Pauline authorship) a fully fledged second century gnosticism. However, Kelly is most likely correct in his assessment that no interpretation can be entirely satisfactory which fails to recognise that the heresy was not exclusively either Jewish or gnostic, but a mixture of both.<sup>1</sup>

Although the false teachers knew the law they did not teach the law properly or lawfully (1 Timothy 1:8). They added to the law and distorted the true meaning of the law. It may well be, although it is by no means certain, that our understanding of the instructions in chapter 2 would benefit from a more exact knowledge of the false teaching that was prevalent at Ephesus. However, be that as it may, we still encounter in chapter 2 clear teaching as to the way in which the congregation of God's people ought to conduct themselves. This is confirmed by Paul's explicit reference to the behaviour of the congregation of God in 1 Timothy 3:15, prescriptions for which Paul has been giving since 1 Timothy 2:1. In particular, the opening verses of chapter 2 refer to the manner of prayer which then leads Paul to consider the one to whom they are praying and the one mediator between God and men, namely our Saviour Jesus. Verses 8 following then continue Paul's instructions to the congregation as they relate to men and women respectively, leading on to the criteria for elders and deacons which are taken up in the following chapter.

### Paul's Desire for Prayer, vv 8-10

Paul returns in verse 8 to the matter of prayer which he introduced in verse 1. Here, however, his concern is the manner in which men pray. He desires that

they pray lifting holy hands without anger or quarrelling. Paul's use of the verb *gōdōlogai* carries a strong authoritative tone. It is no mere wish on behalf of Paul but, rather the strong desire of apostolic authority that he lays upon the men in their prayer life. The assumption is that Paul is still speaking of the life of the congregation, that is, of the public prayer offered when Christians assemble. Their prayer is to be prayer offered with clean lips or holy hands, a metaphor for purity of intention, and is to be paralleled by purity of life. This is to be seen especially in the relationships that members have with one another. There ought, therefore, to be no anger or quarrelling.

In verse 9 Paul, continuing to express his desire for prayer, addresses the women. The conjunction *ἀλλά* meaning 'likewise' links what follows with what has preceded. The exact nature of this link may not be certain. At the very least Paul is considering the same sphere in verse 9 as he is in verse 8, that is, the behaviour of Christians in the congregation. However, Paul could also be expressing his desire for the way in which women ought to pray when they do so in public assembly, as he does, for example, in 1 Corinthians 11:5. Regardless of our understanding of the exact strength of the conjunction *ἀλλά*, Paul addresses instructions to the men in verse 8 and to women in verses 9 and 10. A question therefore naturally arises as to whether the rubrics Paul gives for men in the public assembly and those that he gives for women in public assembly are interchangeable. It would certainly be true that women also ought not to quarrel or express anger in their lives or indeed in their prayers. It may be, however, that this was a particular problem with the men in Ephesus, or it may be as some have suggested that the Christians were following the Jewish custom of allowing only men to pray. It probably would not have occurred to men to wear the kind of apparel which Paul prohibits in verse 9 and we may safely assume that it therefore did not occur to Paul to prohibit the men from braiding their hair with gold or pearls or costly attire.

#### Learning and Teaching, vv 11-12

Having spoken about the manner of women's dress in the public assembly Paul then goes on to speak of the way in which they should learn in the congregation. Verse 11 indicates that a woman should learn in silence with all submissiveness. The word for silence *ἥσυχία*, which occurs at the beginning of verse 11 and the end of verse 12, suggests a certain structure in the way in which Paul has penned these verses. Verse 11 is concerned with one particular issue, the manner in which women learn, whereas verse 12 is concerned with the prohibition of women teaching or exercising authority over men. As J B Hurley<sup>2</sup> has noted 'quiet learning inversely parallels (verbal) teaching, and full submission inversely parallels exercising authority'. The positive injunction

in verse 11 presupposes that women ought to learn. This is in contradistinction to some rabbinic teaching which prohibited women from even learning the Torah.<sup>3</sup> However, this positive teaching encouraging women in their learning is qualified by the need for women to learn in silence with all submissiveness. The word for silence *ἥσυχία* is not to suggest 'buttoned lips' but the quiet receptivity and submission which is fitting for a woman.<sup>4</sup> In contrast Paul uses another word for the silence, required of women in 1 Corinthians 14 which means literally 'to shut up'. Here, however, Paul is highlighting the peacefulness or restfulness with which a woman ought to learn. In the context, this is the position of learning that a woman takes. Although Paul places restrictions in the next verse on women teaching, the encouragement that he gives to women in their learning ought not to be missed.

The positive aspects of a woman's role in the congregation outlined in verse 11 is supplemented by the negative aspect, that is, the prohibition of verse 12. In this verse Paul does not permit (*ἐπιτρέπω*, which is a word of strong injunction) a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man. The Greek word 'to teach' is the normal word that is found in the New Testament for giving instruction. However the word to exercise authority (*ἀδελτεύειν*) is a word which only occurs here in the New Testament. The King James Version translates it 'sup authority' with the intention of giving the meaning that what is prohibited for women is the wrongful assumption of authority. The RSV, however, translates the verb as the neutral phrase 'to have authority over'. Although there has been much debate as to the meaning of this particular Greek verb, the recent research of George W Knight III supports the translation of the RSV.<sup>5</sup> After canvassing all the uses of *ἀδελτεύειν* in the Greek literature available to him, Knight concludes that the verb is a neutral verb and has no pejorative or negative overtones. It does not mean to dominate but to exercise authority. Only in those passages where the context clearly indicates a pejorative force is the verb to be translated as 'dominate'. However, there is no negative overtone to this verb in the context in 1 Timothy 2, and since the verb itself has no inherent negative aspect, it is correct to translate it as simply the exercise of authority. What is pertinent to Paul's remark is that this authority is not to be exercised over a man. Presumably Paul would be happy for women to exercise authority over women, but what is prohibited for women is their exercise of authority over men.

Those interpreters who wish to retain the KJV translation of *ἀδελτεύειν*, namely, 'to usurp authority, remove the difficulty as they see it of Paul's prohibition of women exercising authority over men. However, they embrace the greater difficulty of Paul's reason for this prohibition. For if Paul is denying women the opportunity of usurping authority, surely this injunction

would equally apply to men as well as women. Yet the reason that Paul gives is unique to women and indeed could *not* apply to men (vv 13-14). The obvious inference of Paul's argument in verses 13 and 14 is that what is prohibited for women in verse 12 is permitted for men. If *ἀδελφεῖν* means to dominate then Paul is implying that men are permitted to dominate men! However this conclusion is directly contrary to the mode of leadership to which Jesus called his disciples (Matthew 20:25, cf. 1 Peter 5:3). Similarly those who wish to infer that Paul is prohibiting women from teaching falsely in verse 12 must draw the logical inference that this activity is permitted for men.<sup>6</sup>

Nonetheless a question arises as to the exact nature of the teaching and the exercise of authority that Paul had in mind. It is obvious in Paul's teaching elsewhere that every Christian is able to teach. Indeed all Christians are encouraged to teach and admonish one another in all wisdom (Colossians 3:16). Likewise older women are instructed to teach younger women (Titus 2:3). We even have the episode recorded by Luke in Acts 18 of Priscilla and her husband Aquilla teaching Apollos as they expounded to him the way of God more accurately than he himself had been teaching. The evidence of this general ministry of teaching and Paul's specific prohibition for teaching suggests that there are two levels of teaching operating in Paul's mind: the private one-to-one level and the public one-to-many level. Paul is not saying that women are incapable of teaching, rather he is saying that it is not permitted for women to teach men, that is, it is not permitted for women to take up the *role* of a teacher. Whereas teaching is a general activity of all Christians this ought not to undermine the specific role of teaching which is given only to the few, the few whom God has designated by their gifts, and the recognition of those gifts by the congregation, to be teachers of God's people. To be more specific the role of the teacher is part and parcel of the role of the elder. Indeed, he who desires to be an elder over the people of God must be apt to teach (1 Timothy 3:2).

In the context of 1 Timothy 3 where Paul outlines the criteria for elders and deacons it is not without significance that Paul includes women among those who are eligible for the office of deacon and, by inference, excludes women from the office of elder (or bishop). That Paul includes women deacons in chapter 3 verse 11 is clear from the fact that:

- (i) the definite article is not used, which would have been expected if Paul was referring to the wives of deacons,
- (ii) if Paul had been referring to the wives of deacons it is unusual that he did not make reference to the wives of elders and their requisite qualities,

- (iii) the evidence of Phoebe as a deaconess in Romans 16:1 suggests that female deacons were not unknown in the early church, and
  - (iv) the use of the word 'likewise' in verse 11 suggests that the women are being treated in the same manner as the men of verse 8; that is, they too are being considered as deacons.
- Interestingly the reference to 'husband of one wife' follows the reference to women in verse 11.

That Paul includes the criterion of aptitude to teach as one of the requisite gifts for the elder is not to deny the fact that all Christians are called upon to teach one another and are in one sense, at one level that is, apt to teach. Similarly, Paul's prohibition of women teaching men is not to deny the general permission and indeed encouragement of women in one-to-one situations to teach and admonish any disciple; be they male or female. Paul's concern as we have seen consistently throughout chapter 2 is the conduct of the congregation and in the congregation the public office of teaching is to be reserved for men and not for women.

That Paul couples the concept of teaching and exercising authority confirms these observations. In a one-to-one situation of teaching there is no specific authority attached to the one who is teaching, whereas in the context of the congregation there is an authority invested in the office of the teacher which is not inherent to all believers in their one-to-one ministries. The office of the teacher in the congregation is an office of great honour. As Peter says in 1 Peter 4:11 outlining the various gifts that have been given by God, he says 'whoever speaks, as one who utters oracles of God'.

The teachers of God's Word ought to be careful before they become teachers because they will be judged with greater strictness (James 3:1). Those who are to exercise authority over the congregation are those who must give an account to the great shepherd of the sheep, therefore the writer to the Hebrews instructs the Christians to 'obey your leaders and to submit to them' (Hebrews 13:17). Those who labour among Christian disciples and are over them in the Lord are to be esteemed highly in love because of their work (1 Thessalonians 5:12). Interestingly the work of these elders, or leaders, includes admonition, even though this is part of the activity of all Christians in their one-to-one ministry. Leaders who admonish, however, have an authority to admonish which does not adhere to the general admonition which believers are to exercise in their daily living. Paul therefore is prohibiting women from taking the authoritative role as teacher. The authoritative role would also include ruling, but it is specifically teaching that Paul has in mind.

What about prophecy one might ask? In particular, what about women prophets since the Bible clearly manifests and commends the ministry of prophetesses in both the Old and New Testament? Although some have

advocated that prophecy is virtually equivalent to teaching, or preaching, it has been cogently argued by others that prophecy is the equivalent of revelation whereas teaching is the derivative activity of interpreting revelation.<sup>7</sup> The authority of the former is in the *words* given as they are directly from God. Whereas the authority of the latter is in the *person* as well as the *words*. For the teacher must interpret for his generation what God has once for all delivered to the saints. Once this division is established it can be seen how God can use women as agents of revelation in their tasks as prophets, but does not use women as agents of authoritative interpretation in the task of teaching.

In the Old Testament the task of teaching was given to the priests, who were exclusively male (Deuteronomy 30:14; Jeremiah 2:8, 18:18; 2 Chronicles 15:3, 31:4; Ezekiel 7:26; Malachi 2:7). The task of being agents of God's revelation, however, was given to male and female alike in the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament. The existence of prophetesses, therefore, in no way detracts from Paul's instruction that women ought not to teach or exercise authority over men.

#### Reasons for Paul's Prohibition

##### 1. Adam was formed first then Eve

At first sight this appears a somewhat naive observation, that of the chronological order of the creation of Adam and Eve. However, for Paul, that Adam was formed first is to see Adam as an inheritor of the title 'first born' (although strictly speaking, Adam was first formed rather than firstborn).<sup>8</sup> It is the Old Testament principle of primogeniture to which Paul is referring.<sup>9</sup> In Deuteronomy 21:15-17 we read the double portion of inheritance went to the firstborn son and that he became the head of the household. The theme of the authority or the headship of the firstborn also finds expression in Paul's description of Christ as 'firstborn over all creation' (Colossians 1:15) and 'firstborn from the dead' (Colossians 1:18). The point that Paul is making is that Adam by virtue of his formation prior to Eve (as the Genesis account makes plain, Eve was taken out of man) gives to Adam an authority and headship over Eve. This headship can be seen in the creation narrative itself where Adam names Eve, calling her woman because she was taken out of man (Genesis 2:23, 3:20). Similarly Adam's naming of the animals in Genesis 2 indicates his authority over them. It is woman who was created for man and she is derivative of him. Although it has been countered that since the animals were created before Adam, they should likewise have authority over man, this

reasoning fails to recognise that the animals are not image bearers of the Creator. Adam is an image bearer and as such is the first to be formed in the image of God. It is this principle which distinguishes Adam and Eve from the animals and the fact that the animals were created before Adam irrelevant.

Man and woman are both equally in the image of God and Genesis 1:26 speaks of their equal status and relationship to God. The temporal priority of man's creation must not be used to denigrate the equal standing with man that woman has before God, and which each manifests in joint dominion over the created order (Genesis 1:26). Indeed the interdependence of man and woman is graphically portrayed in the birth of man from woman (1 Corinthians 11:11). Nonetheless, the creation narrative in chapter 2 also speaks of an ordered relationship of one to the other, of the woman to the man. It is this principle which undergirds the prohibition that Paul gives in 1 Timothy 2:12.

The principle of Adam's headship over Eve is established in the pre-Fall situation of Genesis 2. It has been argued, however, that this asymmetrical relationship of Adam's ruling his wife only occurs as a consequence of the Fall. Support for this line of argument is usually drawn from Genesis 3:16. Yet a close inspection of Genesis 3:16 clearly demonstrates the continuity of the rule of Adam over his wife from the pre-Fall to the post-Fall situation. Genesis 3:16, to be sure, describes the consequences of sin. However, the consequences of sin are not that man shall rule over his wife, but rather that the woman's desire shall be to rule her husband (that is, an inversion of the created order). It is in the light of this new situation that he must continue to rule over her. That this is the import of the verse can be seen by the parallel construction in Genesis 4:7, where the word 'desire' finds its second and only other occurrence in the whole of the Pentateuch, in sin's desire to rule Cain. Yet to counteract that desire, Cain must master sin.<sup>10</sup>

Genesis 3:16 is not an announcement that man will *now* rule his wife as a result of the Fall, rather it is an announcement that man's rule over his wife will now be frustrated by the woman's desire to rule her husband. This is the reason why the Bible exhorts women to be submissive to their husbands. For the Fall has frustrated the design of God in creation. Before the entrance of sin Eve was a submissive wife but now that sin has wrought its havoc this relationship is disrupted and it is the natural (that is, naturally sinful) response of woman to seek to master her husband. It also ought to be noted that man's loving headship has been similarly disrupted by the Fall and thus Paul exhorts husbands to exercise loving leadership in the way in which Christ loved the church. Sin has disrupted relationships. Only Christ can restore them to the original order of creation, that is, the headship of the husband over the wife and the submission of the wife to the husband.

*ii. Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived*

Whereas the first reason that Paul advocates for the prohibition of women teaching and exercising authority over men is found in Genesis 2, the second reason comes in Genesis 3 where sin enters God's world and brings about disruption. The way in which sin, or in particular Satan, operates highlights the created order according to Paul. Although it is true that both Adam and Eve sinned, Paul makes a distinction here between the sin of Adam and the sin of Eve. Eve became a transgressor by way of deception whereas Adam was not deceived. Douglas Moo suggests it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that women in general are susceptible to deception.<sup>11</sup> Yet this cannot be maintained when Paul in 2 Corinthians 11:3 warns all Christians, male and female, from being led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning. The reference to Eve's deception by Satan is clearly a reflection by Paul upon the statement in Genesis 3:13 when in reply to God's question Eve states that the serpent beguiled me and I ate.

It ought to be noted that the Genesis narrative has no record of God informing Eve of the prohibition with respect to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Presumably Eve's knowledge of this prohibition came from her husband to whom God spoke. The deception of Eve, we therefore suggest, involved the temptation for Eve to take the initiative in her relationship with Adam. She took the initiative in deciding to eat of the fruit without reference to Adam even though it was through Adam that she had knowledge of the prohibition with respect to the tree. The subtlety of Satan's temptation is to deceive Eve into taking the role of headship. Her action disrupted the relationship between herself and Adam as well as between herself and God. However, it is not without significance that Eve's eyes are opened only after Adam has also eaten. For the created order of the headship of man and the representative headship that Adam has for all men and women is still intact. It is only after he eats that mankind, that is Eve as well as himself, suffers the consequences of his sin. This we suggest is the reason why Adam's sin takes prominence in Paul's theology of the condemnation that fell upon all men and women (Romans 5:12-21). Although Adam also ate of the tree as Eve did, his eating is the eating of the head of the human race. His sin brings the general condemnation of death for all men and women. However, although sin has disrupted the relationship between man and wife, Adam's sin does not involve deception as Eve's does. Eve was deceived to play the role of head.<sup>12</sup> Adam could not be deceived to play that role for that was his role by virtue of the created order; it was just that Adam's role as head took the wrong direction. Moreover God reprimands Adam for listening to his wife (Genesis 3:17). Thus Adam became a transgressor and, through Adam's sin, all sinned. It is only

then that the eyes of all mankind are opened and they are both aware of the shame of nakedness (Genesis 3:7).

A parallel to the deception of Eve may be found in the incident involving Joshua and the Gibeonites in Joshua 9. The Gibeonites who had come from a nearby town deceived Joshua and the elders into believing that they were from a distant country. The writer of Joshua explains that Joshua's sin was not because he could not discern the truthfulness of the Gibeonites' story, but because he did not ask direction from the Lord (Joshua 9:14). Eve's sin was of the same character as Joshua's, we suggest, in that she was given a situation by Satan, in the guise of the serpent, which was new to her. She only had the word of her husband upon which to rely. But rather than going to her husband for direction she chose to take the initiative, an initiative which was outside the realm of her responsibility and which led her into deception and finally transgression. The very fact that Eve was in the presence of an animal who was talking should have alerted her to the unusual circumstances in which she found herself. The created order was already under the process of reversal as the serpent who ought to be under the dominion of man and woman was usurping dominion over the image bearer of God. It is with the same guile of the serpent that Satan continues to seek to reverse the order of creation within the ranks of the image bearers by overturning the asymmetrical relationship between a husband and wife.

Various attempts have been made to understand the role of the woman's deception in the progress of Paul's thought. Paul Jewett, for example, contends that Paul was using a rabbinic understanding of Genesis 2 which was incorrect.<sup>13</sup> David Scholer on the other hand considers that Paul is selectively using parts of Genesis to bolster up his argument.<sup>14</sup> Scholer argues that since the women were being deceived in Ephesus Paul utilises Eve's deception to counter their inclinations to teach falsely. However, this does not take account of the fact that Paul clearly states that Adam was *not* deceived. If Paul had merely stated that Eve was deceived, then it would be difficult to deny that Paul was being selective in his use of Old Testament data. However, since Paul states that Adam was not deceived, then the logical inference is that what applies to the women will not apply to the men. Scholer's argument leaves us with the awkward position of recognising that men are not so easily deceived into false teaching as women.

Rather, what Paul is seeking to establish is that Eve's deception was to reverse the created order, to role play the head rather than the submissive wife. Paul uses Eve to establish a general principle for women. In verse 13 Paul states Adam was formed first then Eve, and in verse 14 he repeats Adam, but instead of referring to Eve, by name describes her as the woman, hence generalising the attributes of Eve to all women. This is not the attribute of

gullibility, or the susceptibility to temptation, but rather the susceptibility to take the initiative in relationships, to play the head, a role which rightly belongs to the man. This is the thrust of Paul's argument which establishes his prohibition against women teaching men in the life of the congregation. His argument rests in creation and is a pre-Fall argument and there is no reason to believe that the grounds for Paul's argument do not continue to exist until the end of this present age.

#### Women and the Bearing of Children, 1 Timothy 2:15

This verse has perplexed commentators for centuries. Of the many interpretations which have been advanced the following is a representative sample:<sup>15</sup>

- a. Despite the judgment upon woman (Genesis 3:16) women will be safely preserved (saved) through childbirth.
- b. Christian women will be saved (that is redemptively) only through the bearing of children.
- c. Christian women will be saved through the childbirth (that is, of the Messiah born of woman).
- d. It is not through the activity of teaching and ruling that Christian women will be saved, but through their faithfulness in fulfilling their proper role as women (summarised by childbearing).
- e. Women will be saved from the deception of lording it over their husbands by devoting themselves to their created role (summarised in the activity of childbearing).

David Scholer sees this verse as pivotal for understanding this whole section of Paul's teaching with respect to women. He suggests that the heresy at Ephesus constituted an assault upon marriage and that Paul is reaffirming the place among the saved that women should occupy through enjoyment in their maternal and domestic roles.<sup>16</sup> Although this may be correct, it is clear from Paul that the false teachers were not exclusively female (1 Timothy 1:18-20, 2:1-8, 6:3-10), although some were (1 Timothy 5:13). Scholer's view does not account for the fact that Paul restricts women from teaching. Though he could have restricted them from false teaching (cf. 1 Timothy 1:3) he does not.

A number of difficulties arise in verse fifteen: the meaning of the future passive 'will be saved', the movement from the singular 'woman' to the plural pronoun 'they', and the nature of the connection between verse 15 and what

precedes. To be sure, the last of these difficulties is the greatest. The lack of connection that interpretations a, b and c make between this verse and the context is probably decisive in their rejection. Paul moves from the deception of Eve (which we have argued is a deception to usurp the role of leadership in the marriage relationship) to woman being saved. Since salvation itself has not been on view in the preceding verses, it is natural to expect that Paul is speaking of the way in which women will be kept from the deception to which he was referring. As Hurley paraphrases it: 'Women in general (and most women of his day) will be kept safe from seizing men's roles by participating in marital life (symbolised by childbirth)'.<sup>17</sup> This understanding of the text explains the movement from the singular to the plural as a generalising principle, in line with Paul's movement from Eve (1 Timothy 2:13) to the woman (1 Timothy 2:14). This interpretation<sup>18</sup> also avoids any theological confusion arising from a salvation by good works (interpretation d).

Paul is not speaking of the path to salvation, rather he is addressing the roles of Christian women in the context of their created order. As Paul encourages young widows to marry and bear children (1 Timothy 5:14) so here 'childbirth', though a part, is used to describe the whole of the woman's role. That not all married women, let alone all women, are able to bear children, does not overrule the principle of synecdoche that Paul employs. Childbirth is the unique role that God has given to women and is therefore the obvious choice for a task which aptly summarises their role in creation. This role, of course, must be exercised in the context of faith, love and holiness, with modesty. This last attribute neatly refers back to the appropriate demeanour of women introduced in verse 9.

#### Conclusions

The passage under review has been the centre of much debate in the Christian community. On face value Paul is restricting the teaching (and ruling) ministry of women. However, this naive impression, it has been argued, is a misunderstanding of Paul. Although some scholars have taken the step of judging Paul mistaken,<sup>19</sup> others have sought to demonstrate that Paul's words, though correct for the first century situation, require new application today. David Scholer has probably provided evangelical ranks with the best defence of an unlimited role for women in the church while at the same time professing an adherence to the authority of the Bible. His position assumes that Paul is countering false teachers among the women at Ephesus. Scholer argues that Paul's use of the creation account is a selective use of Scripture to serve his purpose and that Paul's teaching elsewhere (notably Galatians 3:28) establishes

the principle of equality of ministry between male and female.

Yet, Scholer's arguments about selective use of the Old Testament are inadequate. As has been previously argued, that Adam was not deceived<sup>1</sup> is saying much more than merely 'Eve was deceived'. It is also difficult to see how Paul's argument from primogeniture applies only to women false teachers. Even if Scholer's assessment of the Ephesians heresy is correct, has not Paul proved too much? Would any women in Ephesus dare teach after Paul's injunctions? Paul had already urged Timothy to charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine' (1 Timothy 1:3). Timothy did not forbid these persons from teaching—only from teaching false doctrine. Surely Paul could have done the same in chapter 2 if it were false doctrine (from women) which constituted the problem.<sup>20</sup>

The exegesis offered above is therefore to be preferred. Although Paul encourages the learning of women in quietness, there is no role for them in the teaching of congregations where men are present. The reasons for this prohibition are grounded in creation and find their logical consequence in the criteria for elders (who must be apt to teach) which exclude women, whereas the criteria for deacons are inclusive of women. Although there may be situations when women may occasionally address congregations,<sup>21</sup> this ought not to be the regular pattern of the assembly and should not deflect congregations from ensuring that the principles of Paul's injunctions regarding the role of teaching and exercising authority are obeyed.

- 1 J N D Kelly, *The Pastoral Epistles* (London: 1963), p 45.
- 2 J B Hurley, *Men and Women in Biblical Perspective* (Leicester: 1981), p 201.
- 3 See the remarks and rabbinic citations of A D B Spencer on the first century attitudes towards Jewish women learning the Torah in 'Eve at Ephesus', *JETS* 17 (1974), pp 215-222.
- 4 As Hurley likewise maintains, p 200.
- 5 G W Knight III, *Videtur* in Reference to Women in 1 Timothy 2:12', *NTS* 30 (1984), pp 143-157
- 6 Compare the remarks of David M Scholer in a paper delivered at the Evangelical Colloquium on Women and the Bible at Oak Brook, Illinois, October 1984: 'The injunctions of 2:11-12 are directed against women involved in the false teaching who have sought to abuse proper exercise of authority in the church by usurpation and domination of the male leaders and teachers in the Church at Ephesus', '1 Timothy 2:9-15 and the Place of Women in the Church's Ministry', p 17. Since Paul only prohibits women teaching men, are we to infer that Paul is indifferent to

- women teaching women with false doctrine?
- 7 This view is ably expounded by Richard B Gaffin in *Perspectives on Pentecost* (Phillipsburg: 1978). A contrasting opinion on the nature of prophecy is offered by Wayne Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians* (Washington: 1982).
- 8 The Greek word *πλάτρω* used here in 2:13 is used in the LXX in Genesis 2:7.
- 9 Compare Hurley's discussion of the usage of the term 'firstborn', p 207.
- 10 For a careful and convincing exegesis of this verse see Susan Foh, 'What is the Women's Desire?' *WJT* 37 (1975), pp 276-83.
- 11 D Moo, '1 Timothy 2:11-15: Meaning and Significance', *Trinity Journal* 1 (1980), p 70. However, the following year Moo modified his position in line with Hurley's interpretation (see below), 'The Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:11-15: A rejoinder', *Trinity Journal* 2 (1981), p 204.
- 12 Hurley sees Adam's role as that of exercising religious headship and that Eve should therefore defer to Adam in all matters pertaining to religion for she 'was not prepared (by God) to discern them', p 216.
- 13 P K Jewett, *Man as Male and Female* (Grand Rapids: 1975), p 119.
- 14 Scholer, pp 25-26.
- 15 See Hurley's discussion of this verse, pp 221-23 as well as the observations of Kelly, pp 69-70 and Scholer pp 3-9.
- 16 Scholer, p 5.
- 17 Hurley, p 223
- 18 An understanding first proposed by S Jebb, 'A suggested Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:15', *Expository Times* 81 (1970), pp 221-22.
- 19 Jewett, p 119. See also Robert Banks who argues that Paul (if he wrote the Pastoral) was culturally conditioned in his method of argumentation as well as in the application of his principles. 'Paul and Women's Liberation', *Interchange* 18 (1976), p 101.
- 20 If Paul had intended to prohibit women from the role of teaching and exercising authority over men, one wonders what else he would have had to write beyond the words he chose in 1 Timothy 2, in order to convince a twentieth century reader!
- 21 Exceptions to the rule do not necessarily disprove the rule; they rather establish it by the fact that they are exceptions. Compare Hezekiah's exceptional celebration of the passover (2 Chronicles 30:13-22) and David's eating of the shewbread (Matthew 12:1-8).