

Letters From My Father
Week 6
1 Timothy 2:8-15
“Equal But Not The Same”

Introduction

This is the document containing the family records of Adam. On the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God; He created them male and female. When they were created, He blessed them and called them mankind. Genesis 5:1-2

Men and women are different. I never thought that I would live to see such times that this would become a controversial statement. But here we are! The lines of gender within our society have been so very diluted that no one within the world of the political spectrum or in the entertainment sector seems to be able to even offer a comprehensive definition of “what is a man or a woman.” This ludicrous dissolution of basic, scientific, biological realities will make no mistake, lead to a catastrophic end of civilized society as we know it. This isn’t hyperbole. It is fact. The human race is currently in free-fall toward annihilation.

How did we ever get to this place? By discounting The One Who created us, that is how. In our attempts to declare ourselves wise, we have desired to make our Creator irrelevant. This is a result of man attempting to elevate his own status to that of God. We desire so very much to be the master of our own fates, that we refuse to acknowledge ourselves as being the creation of The Sovereign LORD, Who’s intellect and power are vastly superior to that of our own. But the fact remains that we cannot simply “will God away” or even ignore His presence, no matter how hard we may try to do so.

But sadly, this is exactly the endeavors of our so called “civilized society” today. If you truly want to understand the methodology behind the homosexual and transgender movements today, it is simply this; “I decide who and what I wish to be, and God has nothing whatsoever to do with it.” This is just a revival, if you will, of what caused the downfall of mankind in the first place.

“No! You will certainly not die.” the serpent said to the woman. “In fact, God knows that when you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” The woman saw that the tree was good for food and delightful to look at, and that it was desirable for obtaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. Genesis 3:4-7

As the Apostle Paul was writing his first epistle to Timothy at Ephesus, he instructed the church to be a people of prayer. He instructed them to be continually praying for everyone. And then, he continued by pointing out the differences between the roles of praying men and praying women within the body of Christ. Both sexes are called to be holy and prayerful, but due to the fact that God has specifically designed men and women to be physically and spiritually different, they are commanded in Scriptures to conduct themselves differently within the Church. Although we are equal in Christ Jesus, it does not erase the differences in our design. And we would do well to realize that we will be happiest and most spiritually fulfilled when we acknowledge that God has created us differently, and therefore, we have different functions.

So let us look together at the Scriptures to see just how we are to conduct ourselves when we come together in corporate worship. Men have different roles than women, but both are vital to make the Church of Jesus Christ all that it is meant to be. Men are called to lead, while women are called to a supportive role. But all Believers are required to conduct themselves as people of *Prayer* and *Propriety*, with humble acceptance of our *Placement* within the body of Christ.

Prayer (vs. 8)

Therefore, I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or argument. **1 Timothy 2:8**

Paul begins this portion of his letter by describing the attitude of men in prayerful worship. He will then go on to discuss women and the way that they are to conduct themselves in corporate worship as well. Then after this, he will return to men as it pertains to their respective roles in church leadership. Many liberal scholars have accused Paul of being misogynistic (anti-woman), but nothing could be further from the truth. There are many occasions where he praised the work of women in the church. He often had godly women, such as Pricilla (along with her husband Aquila, **Acts 18**), accompany him on his missionary endeavors. So obviously, Paul held believing women in high regard.

And not only did Paul not “look down” upon women, but we must never forget that Paul’s writings are inspired by the Holy Spirit, and therefore, they are from God, and not merely Paul’s personal opinions. *The Bible* is clear that Paul’s writings are Scripture (**2 Peter 3:15-16**). It is God Who determines how His people are to conduct themselves, and as we have previously discussed (see intro), men and women are designed differently in order to fulfill different functions. One role is no less important than the other, they are merely different and intended to compliment one another, just as men and women are to come together in marriage to create a more perfect union between the two.

Paul declares that all Believing men should be about the business of prayer, not only in the church, but everywhere (**vs. 8**). We are to be a praying people. This concept applies equally to both men and to women. According to Scripture, we are commanded to be in a constant attitude of prayer every day of our lives.

Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in everything; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus. **1 Thessalonians 5:16-17**

This Scripture means that we are to maintain a constant and open line of communication with our Heavenly Father at all times. In short, we should strive to be a people who pray about everything that we say and do; seeking the Father’s will and guidance in all things. Just imagine how much godlier our decision making processes would be, if we truly lived out this directive! I know personally that I would have to ask for forgiveness a lot less, if I would simply pray every time, before I opened my mouth to speak. Can I get a witness?

Paul goes on to mention the attitude which should accompany our prayers; “lifting holy hands without anger or argument”. Holy hands refers to living a morally pure life. Sin will indeed hinder our prayers. When we live as the world lives, we should not expect to be effective in our prayer lives. This is why it is so vital for us not only to pray our way through the day, but to also ask forgiveness when we fail. You will be surprised how much more you long to talk to your Father in Heaven, when you are not ashamed to come into His presence. Remember how Adam and Eve hid from God after their sin in the garden? It is the same with us. Holiness inspires prayerfulness. Clean living allows you to lift clean hands before the throne of God!

After holiness, Paul commands that men everywhere should pray in an attitude of peace. We should not come to God with “anger or argument” in our hearts. The first of these two words in the Greek is *orge* (pronounced *or-gay*), and it simply means anger or wrath. The child of God is to put away anger and leave vengeance to The LORD (**Romans 12:19-21**). We are called to love those who do not love us. Those who belong to Christ will be vindicated in the end, so therefore, we need not worry about those who mistreat us. Our God sees all. So we must give Him our burdens and trust in Him for the outcome.

This leads us to the second word that Paul uses. The CSB translates the word as “argument”, but in the Greek it means a bit more than this. *Dialogismos* carries with it the idea of arguing within one’s own self. In other words, it means doubting. The book of *James* declares that a double-minded man is unstable in all he does (**James 1:6-7**). Therefore, when we come to God in prayer, we must do so in an attitude of complete faith that God is able to do what He says. After all, our very salvation is hinged upon

faith. We must *believe* in order to be saved. How much more should that belief continue in our prayer lives? God is able to do immeasurably more than we could ever ask or imagine (***Ephesians 3:20***). So when we come to Him we must be pure and holy in our living, devoid of malice in our hearts, carrying the full faith and assurance that our God is in complete control. This is the correct formula for the effective prayer warrior!

Propriety (vs. 9-10)

Also, the women are to dress themselves in modest clothing, with decency and good sense, not with elaborate hairstyles, gold, pearls, or expensive apparel, but with good works, as is proper for women who profess to worship God.

1 Timothy 2:9-10

I do not particularly care for the way the CSB translates the first word in the section as “also”. Paul is continuing his subject about prayer through this particular passage as well. He is merely shifting his focus from men to women. Therefore I think the KJV rendering is more suitably translated, “***in like manner also, that women should....***” This rendering makes much more sense, for the topic has not been changed, but rather, its perspective merely shifted to another group.

Women, in their very created existence, are attractive to men. In fact, they are beautiful to behold. This is why they are often referred to as “the fairer sex”. And that is why it is so important for a godly woman to possess a great deal of self-control, when it comes to corporate worship. God commands women to dress “***in modest clothing, with decency and good sense***”, when they gather with men in corporate worship. This does not mean that they aren’t to dress well or to “fix themselves up”, as we say in the south, but it does mean that they are not to dress provocatively, so as to take the focus off God and draw attention to themselves. All of us, who are adults in the room, know exactly what Paul is talking about here, and therefore, the subject should need little, if any, elaboration.

Paul’s words “***with decency and good sense***” are speaking more of an attitude of worship, rather than a clothing style. The words translated “*with decency*” (*meta aidos*) actually mean with reverence. The thought being conveyed is that women should enter the house of God with an attitude of heads bowed in worshipful reflection.

The second word translated “*good sense*” is *sophrosyne*, which refers to having self-control. In other words, women should not come to church with the attitude of enticing men, but rather, in reverence to seek the face of God. After all, we do not gather to be seen, but rather, we congregate to see Him! Christ is to be our center of attention, and therefore, anything that draws attention away from Him is to corrupt the purpose of our coming together in the first place. How much better would our worship services be if everyone’s sole focus was upon Christ and nothing else?

“Again, truly I tell you, if two of you on earth agree about any matter that you pray for, it will be done for you by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My Name, I AM there among them.” ***Matthew 18:19-20***

Also, the wealthy women in Paul’s day would weave pearls and jewelry into their hair as a sign of their status. But in church, everyone should feel a sense of welcome and belonging. Not everyone can afford to “dress to the nines”, as it were. I cannot tell you how many times in my many years of ministry that I have invited someone to church only to hear the response, “Pastor, I have nothing to wear.”

Now don’t get me wrong, I do think that if we are going to meet with our LORD in corporate worship, we should make ourselves presentable, but presentable and ostentatious are two entirely different things. This is the main reason that here in this church we dress casually for worship. We don’t want anyone to feel that we are putting on airs, for we are altogether, simply sinners saved by grace! None of us have anything of which we can boast save Jesus!

Placement (vs. 11-15)

A woman is to learn quietly with full submission. I do not allow a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; instead, she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and transgressed. But she will be saved through childbearing, if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with good sense. **1 Timothy 2:11-15**

When men and women are gathered together in corporate worship, men are required to take the lead role, while women are to assume a subordinate role. This is not my instruction, nor even The Apostle Paul's, it is God's. He is our Creator, and as such, He has every right to set the tone for our worship of Him. The doctrine of submission is a vital part of Christianity. Husbands are to submit themselves to Christ, as wives submit themselves to their husbands.

But I want you to know that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of the woman, and God is the head of Christ. **1 Corinthians 11:3**

This theme is repeated throughout Scripture. It is God's design, and therefore, it is perfect for us. Just as Christ submitted Himself to The Father, men are to submit themselves to Christ, and women are to submit themselves to their husbands. So you see, we are all called to submission. And God intended for men to take the lead role in corporate worship. This is why Paul qualifies his statement by saying, ***"I do not allow a woman to teach or have authority over a man."*** He does NOT say that women cannot teach (some of the best teachers I know are women), but that they cannot teach or lead men. God has determined that men are to take the lead, when we gather together to worship Him.

Now, in this depraved world of *"radical feminism"* and *"gender fluidity"*, this teaching is highly unpopular (but then again, so is Christianity!). But to accept one's role, as assigned by God, is not something to be viewed as a punishment, but rather, it is to be humbly accepted as a gift from God. If we truly believe that it is God Who designed us, then we must also believe that all He has assigned to us is for our best.

Paul goes on to mention the order of creation in support of his argument for the roles of men and women within the body. Adam was created first, and then Eve. The man was therefore designated to take the lead in this relationship. It is interesting to note just how the fall of mankind in the garden of Eden is described in Scripture. Eve was *deceived*, but Adam *disobeyed*. The devil came to tempt Eve, by questioning the LORD'S commands regarding the tree of knowledge of good and evil. But it was Adam who had been explicitly commanded not to eat of its fruit. God didn't discuss it with Eve. He told Adam. And it was Adam's responsibility to make sure that Eve got the memo.

When the devil enticed Eve, he questioned the message that she had received. "Did God *really* say that?!", he asked her incredulously. And this is where she began to stumble. She left out some things that God had said and added others things that He had not. God had commanded Adam that he could *"eat freely"* from all the trees in the garden, except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. For on the day that he ate from that tree, he would surely die (**Genesis 2:16**).

When Satan tempted Eve about what God had said, she left out the part about God saying they could *"eat freely"* from all the other trees. She merely stated that they could eat from them. She discounted the fact that God had amply provided all that they could ever want or need. She took away from what God had given them. It was as if she felt God was withholding something, when, in actuality, He had given to them in abundance.

Then she added to God's Word by saying that they had not even been allowed to touch the fruit of the one tree. God never said they could not touch it. He merely said that they could not eat of it, or they would certainly die. So you see, Adam, as the head of the household, had not done a very good job of instructing his wife. And as a result, she was deceived. But it was Adam who had the greater sin. And God held him accountable for what happened. Why? Because it was his responsibility to make sure that his household obeyed God's directives. The same is true for every husband and Christian leader in the

Church today. God will hold the men accountable for what we have taught in the congregation and in our homes. Just as Adam was given responsibility for man's fall.

Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, in this way death spread to all people, because all sinned. **Romans 5:12**

Eve should have sent the devil to talk to her husband. It was Adam who was entrusted with their directive to obedience. When Eve decided to take upon herself the role of authority for the decision, she was out of order. And that is why the devil tempted her in the first place. It was an attempt to undermine God's order of creation. And his scheme worked to perfection. Thank God that through Christ we have been reconciled. So let us not make the same mistakes over again. When God establishes our respective roles within the body, let us humbly accept our placement! For God knows what is best for all of us.

Paul goes on to say that some will be **"saved through childbearing"**. This does not refer to salvation in the sense of our souls. The word that he uses here is "sozo" in the Greek, and it carries the meaning of being *"made whole"*. Women may not be allowed to teach in corporate worship, but they have been given the privilege of both the bearing and the raising of children. They are the primary teachers of these wonderful gifts from God. It is my humble opinion that the teaching of children in the nurture and admonition of The LORD is the greatest privilege that we have within the church. And it is also my humble opinion that no one does a better job with this privilege than a godly, nurturing woman, who selflessly pours her heart into these precious children.

In addition to the teaching of children, women are also commanded in Scripture to teach other women in the ways of our LORD (**Titus 2:3-5**). So you see, we all have our roles. One is no more important than the other. They are simply different. And thanks be to God for the differences between men and women! May we all humbly accept the design that He has bestowed upon each of us and use it to glorify Him in all that we say and do. So when we come together in worship and prayer, let us do so in faith, love, holiness, and self-control (**vs.15**). For this is the will of our God, Who has adequately equipped us so that we may be effective in His kingdom, and for His glory.

Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is very powerful in its effect.

James 5:16

TRUTH!!!