

Women and a study of cultures and scriptures with a focus on Corinthians and 1 Timothy

Underlying any study, recognize:

- God's fundamental principles don't change
- Christ clarified them at a time when humanity was ready to move from milk to meat
- Culture Changes
- In our lives we face challenges that can affect what we perceive about God, about Christ, about scripture
- Scripture must be interpreted the best way we can, understanding culture and contexts they are written to, translating words and messages, dealing with the problems they addressed, then and only then looking for how it guides us today in our culture with our problems.

We want to handle scripture "rightly dividing the word of truth", not yielding on principles but navigating culture so that souls are brought to Christ. Traditions, culture, and personal opinions must be secondary to the mission of spreading the gospel

Jesus, foundational doctrine, and mission

- There is One God
- Jesus is the Son of God
- His miracles serve as witness to authenticate his power and message
- He shifts worship from temple or mountain to spirit and truth, from going to worship to always being in worship
- He removes "religion" in the way of laws, sacrifices, ceremonies, sabbath days, and a proper liturgy service
- He lives to change hearts not religious practices
- He establishes his kingdom summarizing it as centered on **Love**-loving God and loving fellow man as self
- He attests to the value of each individual-Jew, Samaritan, Greek, male and female, slave and free
- His death pays the price for our moral failure and his resurrection is the bedrock proof of who He is

Jesus primary purpose is not to change culture. He wants to change people. His messengers must navigate various cultures in the best way to proclaim this message without causing so much disruption in society that Christ's goal gets lost in the noise of social cultural disruption.

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Rom 12:1

Studying 1 Timothy 2 Paul's letter to Timothy about how to deal with problems in Ephesus.

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people.

This has now been witnessed to at the proper time. And for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle—I am telling the truth, I am not lying—and a true and faithful teacher of the Gentiles.

Therefore I want the men everywhere to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or disputing. I also want the women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, adorning themselves, not with elaborate hairstyles or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God.

A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man she must be quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. But women will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.

There are many references, but our primary study was in God's Woman Revisited.

It was built upon the book *God's Woman*, written in 1938 by the respected evangelist, educator, writer, and debater, C. R. Nichol. Nichol was troubled by what he believed was unbiblical limitations on women, especially on teaching men in group settings. Breaking with traditional interpretations, he did a fresh study of the Bible...at the time his work was applauded. Culture changed- the 40s and WW II and women take on "male jobs" at home, the 50s and the creation of "teenagers", 60s and 70s with birth control, the sexual revolution, and feminism. We reacted with selected scripture.

Burke, Gary. *God's Woman Revisited: Women and the Church*:

...As we have all noticed, large numbers of our young people have moved on. They are casualties of the culture wars raging in our society. Many a young Christian woman has lamented the fact that the only place in her world where she has restrictions placed on her because of her gender is the church. Large numbers of our young Christian men feel her hurt and likewise are becoming estranged from the faith of their parents.

Much of the discussion among us and the rest of the biblically focused Christian world has either been a reiteration of traditional interpretations or a nod to our culture. Too often a study of the relevant biblical texts in their own contexts, done without the pressure applied by either of these two influences, has languished in the background.

Craig Blomberg, NIV Commentary:

(These scriptures reveal) the need for all believers to have a relatively sophisticated grasp of principles of biblical hermeneutics, so that they can sift through historical-cultural background, understand the meaning of key terms and grammatical interrelationships within a passage, and fit this passage in with Paul's other teaching on the topic.

We all need regular reminders of the role presuppositions play in our interpretation, and we must moderate our opinions with healthy doses of humility. We must study all the Scriptures relevant to a topic like men's and women's roles and affirm a position that we believe does adequate justice to all of the biblical data. In short, we must agree to disagree at times.

Scripture Plain and simple

Therefore I want the men everywhere to pray, lifting up holy hands 1 Timothy 2:8

A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man she must be quiet. 1 Tim 2:11-12 NIV

How do you decide which is cultural and can be discarded, and which is not cultural but universal?

How many times are we told to greet with a holy kiss?

- Romans 16:16 Greet one another with a holy kiss.
- 1 Corinthians 16:20 Greet one another with a holy kiss.
- 2 Corinthians 13:12 Greet one another with a holy kiss.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:26 Greet all God's people with a holy kiss.

How many times are we told about speaking in tongues?

- Acts 10:46 For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said,
- Acts 19:6 When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.
- 1 Corinthians 12:10 to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues.
- 1 Corinthians 12:28 And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues.
- 1 Corinthians 12:30 Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?
- 1 Corinthians 13:1 If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.

- 1 Corinthians 13:8 Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.
- 1 Corinthians 14:5 I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified.
- 1 Corinthians 14:6 Now, brothers and sisters, if I come to you and speak in tongues, what good will I be to you, unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or word of instruction?
- 1 Corinthians 14:18 I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you.
- 1 Corinthians 14:21 In the Law it is written: "With other tongues and through the lips of foreigners I will speak to this people, but even then they will not listen to me, says the Lord."
- 1 Corinthians 14:22 Tongues, then, are a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers; prophecy, however, is not for unbelievers but for believers.
- 1 Corinthians 14:23 So if the whole church comes together and everyone speaks in tongues, and inquirers or unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are out of your mind?
- 1 Corinthians 14:39 Therefore, my brothers and sisters, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues.

Plain and Simple paradoxes?

Marriage 1 Cor 7:8-9- *to the unmarried and the widows I say: It is good for them to stay unmarried as I do*
1 Tim 5:14 *So I counsel younger widows to marry, to have children*

Food and idols Acts 21:25- *abstain from food sacrificed to idols*

1 cor 8:4- *about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that "An idol is nothing"*

1 tim 4:3-4- *hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron... order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving*

Slavery 1 Cor 7:20- *each person should remain in the situation they were in when God called them. Were you a slave when you were called? Don't let it trouble you*

1 Cor 9:19- *Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible.*

1 Cor 7:23- *You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of human beings.*

Paid leadership positions Matt 10:5-15, Mark 6:6-11, Luke 9:1-6- *Do not get any gold or silver or copper to take with you in your belts—no bag for the journey or extra shirt or sandals or a staff, for the worker is worth his keep.*

1 Tim 5: 17-18- *The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For Scripture says, ..."The worker deserves his wages".*

1 Cor 9:14- *the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.*

1 Cor 9:18- *What then is my reward? Just this: that in preaching the gospel I may offer it free of charge, and so not make full use of my rights as a preacher of the gospel.*

Dress Codes 1 Cor 11:5- *every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head*

1 Tim 2:9 - *I also want the women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, adorning themselves, not with elaborate hairstyles or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but with good deeds*

Works and Faith Eph 2:8- *it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves*

2 Cor 5:10- *we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad*

Judaism Rom 3:1-2 *What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew, or what value is there in circumcision? Much in every way!*

Gal 5:6 - *in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.*

A. Gods People, History and Culture

Creation, Eden, and EZER/Azar

- *Then the Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper [in the sense of a partner or ally; the word does not imply subordinate status; same word for God as our helper/savior] who is right for [is suitable for; corresponds with] him."* Gen 2 Expanded Bible Translation
- Ex 18:4- *Moses said, "My father's God was my Helper; he saved me from the sword of Pharaoh."*
- Deut 33:29- *Blessed are you, Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the Lord? He is your shield and helper*
- Ps 33:20- *We wait in hope for the Lord; He is our help and our shield.*

OT Jewish History as nomads

- Abraham-Sarah, Hagar
- Isaac-Rebekah
- Jacob-Leah/Rachel
- Famine Joseph and Egypt

Egypt, and the beginning of Jewish slavery

- **Women in leadership**- One of the first women to hold the rank of pharaoh was Hatshepsut, who began her rule in about 1,500 B.C.E. Cleopatra, 69-30 BC-on the throne, then removed from power and banished. She sought help from Julius Caesar, the leader of Roman Republic. Later she teams up with Marc Antony.
- **Equality in social and legal circumstances**- Women in Egypt had legal rights equal to those of men in the same social class and retained these in marriage. A middle-class woman might sit on a local tribunal and give judgment. An Egyptian woman might inherit property and bequeath property, engage in real estate transactions, and she might use her land as security against a loan. She could witness legal documents and act upon her own in legal matters. She could press a suit in court.
- **Equality in the home**- Herodotus, who is called the father of history wrote, "The Egyptians themselves in their manners and customs seem to have reversed the ordinary practices of mankind. For instance, women attend market and are employed in trade, while men stay at home and do the weaving." A first-century B.C. Greek historian wrote how the Egyptian wife "lords it over her husband as in the deed about the dower, the men agree to obey the wife in everything!" (Diodorus Siculus, 1,27,2, quotation by Lesko, The Remarkable Women).

Exodus from Egypt

- Ex 15:19-21 *When Pharaoh's horses, chariots and horsemen went into the sea, the Lord brought the waters of the sea back over them, but the Israelites walked through the sea on dry ground. Then Miriam the prophet, Aaron's sister, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women followed her, with timbrels and dancing. Miriam sang to them: "Sing to the Lord, for he is highly exalted.*
- Micah 6:4 *Listen to what the Lord says: .."I brought you up out of Egypt and redeemed you from the land of slavery. I sent Moses to lead you, also Aaron and Miriam."*
- Num 12:1-5 *Miriam and Aaron began to talk against Moses because of his Cushite wife, for he had married a Cushite. "Has the Lord spoken only through Moses?" they asked. "Hasn't he also spoken through us?" And the Lord heard this. (Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth.) At once the Lord said to Moses, Aaron and Miriam, "Come out to the tent of meeting, all three of you." So the three of them went out. Then the Lord came down in a pillar of cloud; he stood at the entrance to the tent and summoned Aaron and Miriam....*

Prophets Judges, Kings and Queens. Women's stories are not stories of silence.

- **Deborah** was a judge and a prophetess (Judges 4:4), and a "mother in Israel" (5:7).
- **Huldah** a prophetess whom King Josiah consulted instead of Jeremiah, her contemporary (2 Kings 22:14-20).

- **Abigail** navigated a politically tense conflict between King David and her husband, Nabal. Her wisdom and valor so touched King David that she became his wife after Nabal's death (1 Samuel 25:23-42).
- **Miriam**, Moses' sister possessed instrumental, hymnic, and prophetic gifts that served Israel well during the wilderness years, and she helped lead Israel. (Exod. 15:20; Mic. 6:4).
- **Ruth, Rahab. Jezebel and Delilah.** Women's stories are not in silence.

God's people and their journey through other cultures. Slavery and further cultural views on women that will influence Israel:

Assyria- Captures Northern Kingdom, they become "Samaritans". Assyria also strongly influences the Southern Kingdom

"Neither wives of citizens nor widows ... who go out on the street may have their heads uncovered. The daughters of a citizen ... must veil themselves. ... A sacred prostitute whom a man married must veil herself on the street, but one whom a man did not marry must have her head uncovered on the street; she must not veil herself. A harlot must not veil herself; her head must be uncovered. He who has seen a harlot veiled must arrest her... they shall flog her fifty times with staves and pour pitch on her head. Middle Assyrian laws 1500-1000 BC

Babylon-"The foulest Babylonian custom is that which compels every woman of the land to sit in the temple of Aphrodite and have intercourse with some stranger at least once in her life....there is a great multitude of women coming and going; passages marked by line run every way through the crowd, by which the men pass and make their choice." Herodotus, 400s BC, Historian of Persian empire

Persia- Women in ancient Persia were not only highly respected but, in many cases, considered the equals of males. Women could own land, conduct business, received equal pay, could travel freely on their own, and in the case of royal women, hold their own council meetings on policy. The Achaemenid Empire followed a patriarchal paradigm but, within that framework, women had more rights and responsibilities than in any other ancient civilization except that of Egypt. Women, like men, were defined by social class and rank within that class. Encyclopedia of World History

Queen Esther, wife of Xerxes I, is a royal woman of the Achaemenid Period even though she was not Persian by birth. Haman, the king's advisor resolves to slaughter the Jewish people and secures the king's permission to do this.

It is Esther that God uses to save His people.

The Greeks and Hellenization

The Greek Legacy of Disdain for Women- it is in the brilliant minds of her philosophers and teachers that we find the source of the Western world's formalized conviction that women are inferior to men.

Homer, (Iliad and Odyssey), sang of male heroes "each one gives law to his children and to his wives."

Socrates (c. 470-399 B.C.) referred to women as "the weaker sex," and argued that being born a woman is a divine punishment, since a woman is halfway between a man and an animal, he asked, "in which in all these respects the male sex is not far better than the female?"

Xenophon, a disciple of Socrates, said the perfect woman is one that you "might see as little as possible, hear as little as possible, and ask as little as possible."

Demosthenes, born one year earlier than Aristotle, analyzed the roles of women in Athens: "We have courtesans for our pleasures, prostitutes for daily physical use, wives to bring up legitimate children and to be faithful stewards in household matters."

Zeno said women distracted men from the study of philosophy, sexual intercourse is justified only for pro-creation. Zeno's followers championed the value of asceticism and celibacy for the sake of the search for truth.

A saying of gratitude attributed to Socrates, third century BCE for having been born human and not a brute, a man and not a woman, Greek and not barbarian.

Aristotle- Called the father of science. In trying to examine and understand the universe he said: “For the first principle of movement...whereby that which comes into being is male, is better and more divine than the material whereby it is female. The male however comes together and mingles with the female for the work of generation” (Aristotle, Book II).

He felt women were doomed to be subservient to men because that they were unable to “...control themselves physically and psychologically through the exercise of reason the way men can” (Whaley, 16).

Aristotle used his biology of sex to determine each gender’s role in society. He felt that the rational, strong, active, and perfect form of humanity ought to receive an education and hold positions of power. Women, being endowed with irrationality, weakness, passivity, and imperfection, were not capable of abstract reasoning and were bound to the domestic sphere.

He believed the man is to his wife as a soul is to the physical body, meant to command. The “equality of the two or rule of the inferior is always hurtful” “our future guardians should not imitate women acting ‘womanish’ nor slaves acting ‘slavish.’

Alexander the Great, a student of Aristotle conquers the world, and spreads this Greek culture i.e. “Hellenization”

Romans conquer Greece 146 BC and Egypt 31 BC. Pax Romana “Roman peace” makes travel easier, and the dispersion of culture, art, language, and philosophy safer.

Hellenization by Jesus’ time:

- Horace, a Roman poet, wrote in 35 B.C.: "Although we conquered Greece, she conquered us." = universalizing the Greek culture, language, philosophy, art and music, and the view of women.
- Jewish prayer book “the three blessings”: “Blessed are you O God, King of the Universe, Who has not made me a *goy* [Gentile],” “a **slave**,” or “a **woman**.” (Socrates plagiarized).
- Put not trust in a single witness, but let there be three or at least two, whose evidence shall be accredited by their past lives.

From **women** let no evidence be accepted because of the triviality and rashness of their sex; neither let a **slave** bear witness because of the baseness of their soul, since whether from greed or fear it is likely that they will not attest the truth.
Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, first century

John 3 and 4:

- A Pharisee, a **man** named Nicodemus who was a member of the **Jewish ruling council**. He came to Jesus at **night** and said, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God.... “You are Israel’s teacher,” said Jesus, “and do you not understand these things?”
- This is the verdict: **Light** has come into the world, but people loved **darkness**.... whoever lives by the truth comes into the light
- Jesus meets the **Samaritan woman at noon**...“I can see that you are a prophet....“Woman, believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.....true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.....The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming.....Then Jesus declared, “I the one speaking to you—I am he.” Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?”

In the gospels we have:

- Women with Jesus
- Women touched by Jesus
- Women taught
- Women healed by Jesus
- Women forgiven by Jesus
- Women carrying the message for Jesus
- Women at the cross
- Women as witnesses at the empty tomb

Culture and Society- Rome, Corinth, and Ephesus. Cities of international significance

Rome

- Upper Class women stay home and tend to the domestic.
- Lower class women may work for a living such as in agriculture, markets, crafts, as midwives and as wet-nurses.
- Respectable women-Roman women could generally be separated between respectable and not. **Clothes** became a useful tool. Respectable women wore a long dress or stola, a mantle (palla) and had ties in their hair (vittae) whilst prostitutes wore a toga.

Roman women had a very limited role in public life. They could not attend, speak in, or vote at political assemblies and they could not hold any position of political responsibility, some women with powerful partners might influence public affairs through their husbands but were the exceptions (Luke 8 Joanna the wife of Chuza, the manager of Herod Antipa's estate- helping to support Jesus out of their own means. Matt 27- While Pilate was sitting on the judge's seat, his wife sent him this message: "Don't have anything to do with that innocent man, for I have suffered a great deal today in a dream because of him.")

The distinction between these two groups was not just a moral one for prostitutes and other lower-class women had even fewer rights than women of a higher social status. Prostitutes and waitresses, for example, could not prosecute for rape and the rape of slaves was considered merely as property damage sustained by the owner.

Marriage

- Men especially prominent men were expected to marry and have a family
 - Women had far higher status in Christian world than Greco-Roman world at large, women flock to the church
 - Christian women significantly avoided the infanticide/abortion problem
 - Significant sex ratio shifts due to infanticide (especially female)
 - High rate of infertility in non-Christian women due to abortion & contraceptive practices
 - Christian families tended not to give daughters in marriage to pagans
- Stark, The Rise of Christianity

The family unit

"The wife ought to have no feelings of her own, but she should join with her husband in seriousness and sportiveness and in soberness and laughter" "A wife ought not to make friends of her own, but to enjoy her husband's friends in common with him. The gods are the first and most important friends. Wherefore it is becoming for a wife to worship and to know only the gods that her husband believes in, and to shut the front door tight upon all strange rituals and foreign superstitions. For with no god do stealthy and secret rites performed by a woman find any favor"

First Century Greek Scholar Plutarch, Moralia

Christians Influence on Roman society

"Correspondence between the Governor Pliny and the Emperor Trajan, 111-112 AD

"They asserted, however, that the sum and substance of their fault or error had been that they were accustomed to meet on a fixed day before dawn and sing responsively a hymn to Christ as to a god, and to bind themselves by oath, not to some crime, but (*instead they promise*) not to commit fraud, theft, or adultery, not falsify their trust, nor to refuse to return a trust when called upon to do so. When this was over, it was their custom to depart and to assemble again to partake of food--but ordinary and innocent food. Even this, they affirmed, they had ceased to do after my edict by which, in accordance with your instructions, I had forbidden political associations.

Accordingly, I judged it all the more necessary to find out what the truth was by torturing two female slaves who were called deaconesses. But I discovered nothing else but depraved, excessive superstition. I therefore postponed the investigation and hastened to consult you. For the matter seemed to me to warrant consulting you, especially because of the number involved. For many persons of every age, every rank, and also of both sexes are and will be endangered. For the contagion of this superstition has spread not only to the cities but also to the villages and farms.

But it seems possible to check and cure it. It is certainly quite clear that the temples, which had been almost deserted, have begun to be frequented, that the established religious rites, long neglected, are being resumed, and that from everywhere sacrificial animals are coming, for which until now very few purchasers could be found. Hence it is easy to imagine what a multitude of people can be reformed if an opportunity for repentance is afforded.

Veils and “the Law”:

Elite women in ancient Mesopotamia and in the Greek and Persian empires wore the veil as a sign of respectability and high status. The earliest attested reference to veiling is found in a Middle Assyrian law code dating from between 1400 and 1100 BC. Assyria had explicit sumptuary laws detailing which women must veil and which women must not, depending upon the woman's class, rank, and occupation in society. Female slaves and prostitutes were forbidden to veil and faced harsh penalties if they did so.

Veiling was thus not only a marker of aristocratic rank, but also served to "differentiate between 'respectable' women and those who were publicly available". The veiling of matrons was also customary in ancient Greece. Between 550 and 323 B.C.E respectable women in classical Greek society were expected to seclude themselves and wear clothing that concealed them from the eyes of strange men.

Classical Greek and Hellenistic statues sometimes depict Greek women with both their head and face covered by a veil. Caroline Galt and Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones have both argued from such representations and literary references that it was commonplace for women (at least those of higher status) in ancient Greece to cover their hair and face in public.

Roman women were expected to wear veils as a symbol of the husband's authority over his wife; a married woman who omitted the veil was seen as withdrawing herself from marriage. In 166 BC, consul Sulpicius Gallus divorced his wife because she had left the house unveiled, thus allowing all to see, as he said, what only he should see. Unmarried girls normally didn't veil their heads, but matrons did so to show their modesty and chastity, their *pudicitia*. Veils also protected women against the “evil eye”, it was thought.

Veils, Wikipedia

Corinth

- Class warfare (rich patrons, workers, sailors, women, and slaves).
- Ports and sailors- the narrow isthmus between larger Greek land mass and Corinth allows a short cut between Rome and Asia which makes the trip shorter and safer. This brings wealth to those who control the ports and the shipping as they off load at one port and onload at another.
- This creates a rich upper class from shipping, much like the railroad barons of the 1900s who expect to be seated at the finest tables and not mingle with the unworthy lower class. Their money is influence. Is this why Paul preachers there “for free”, so as to not be seen to cater to the rich who would “pay most of his salary”?
- Shipping brings sailors from around the world to Corinth.
- Greek influence and gender roles and the value of women
- “Religion”: Aphrodite the goddess of love. 1000 cult prostitutes in her temple and a sizable contingent within the city itself. How convenient.



A close connection has long existed among sailors, ports, and prostitutes. The city of Corinth in Greece was well known for the services that its prostitutes provided to sailors passing between the eastern and western Mediterranean through the Isthmus. According to Strabo (8.6.20), "The city was frequented and enriched by the multitudes who resorted there on account of these women. Masters of ships freely squandered all their money, and thus the proverb, 'Not for every man is the voyage to Corinth.'"

In ancient Greek the verb Κοινηθιάζεσθαι (*Korinthiazesthai*) means 'to be sexually promiscuous', and the expression Κορίνθιος κόρη was a slang term meaning "a Corinthian girl" or prostitute (Plato, *Republic* 404d).

Respectable women in Corinthian society-Hair and veils

Respectable women in society- Veils

Prostitute- no veil

Adulteress-shaved heads LET HER BE SHORN: 1 CORINTHIANS 11 AND FEMALE HEAD SHAVING IN ANTIQUITY Curtis E. Montier

The visitors and sailors from all over the world need to know what kind of woman you are. The distinction between these groups was not just a moral one. Prostitutes, slaves, and other lower-class women have few rights or legal recourse for assault, rape, or other mistreatment. It is important to know who is who.

Corinthian culture, Christian assemblies and 1 Corinthians

Every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head -it is the same as having her head shaved. (respectable)

What then shall we say, brothers and sisters? When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up..... Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says. If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church.....

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.

How scriptures can be read with a view of current culture. Growing up in the 70's and facing feminism and the sexual revolution in culture, in my church we did this:

~~*Every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head—it is the same as having her head shaved.....*~~

~~*What then shall we say, brothers and sisters? When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up.....*~~

~~*Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law (what law? The same one that enforces veils and penalties?) says. If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church.....*~~

~~*Therefore, my brothers and sisters, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.*~~

But what if we did this (and we will deal with the strike through scripture further below):

Every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head—it is the same as having her head shaved.

*What then shall we say, **brothers and sisters**? When you come together, **each of you** has a **hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation**. Everything must be done so that **the church may be built up**.....*

~~Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says. If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church.....~~

*Therefore, **my brothers and sisters, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues**. But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way. (In an international port city like Corinth, would speaking in foreign language tongues be beneficial to spreading the gospel by the way?)*

Could it be that Jesus told the Samaritan women you will no longer GO to worship, mountain or temple, Samaria or Jerusalem? Does He mean you will always be in worship, in spirit and in truth? Is He saying that when you assemble, it is not to go to worship, it is to bring worship with you? Maybe we have no opening and closing prayer? Maybe we never leave worship?

Is Paul saying that when you bring worship with you to the assembly, brothers and sisters, I expect each of you to bring a song, or a word of teaching, or a revelation you've had, or an inspiration in a tongue or interpretation? Aren't they doing this so that the church may be built up? Do we harm not only women but the church as a whole if we block this?

Is Paul saying to his brothers and sisters don't just "do worship", be eager to share worship!

Could it be that the church I grew up in put less value on a woman in the assembling of the church than Corinth!

Ephesus, wonder woman, and Artemis

In Greek mythology, the Amazons are portrayed in several ancient epic poems and legends, such as the Labours of Hercules, the *Argonautica*, and the *Iliad*. They were a group of female warriors and hunters, who matched men in physical agility and strength, in archery, riding skills, and the arts of combat. Their society was closed for men, and they only raised their daughters.

Artemis Ephesia:

It is the woman who is more divine (vs. Aristotle's "scientific" view). Artemis is the Mother of the Gods herself. Her direct connections through the Amazons to the goddess Cybele, places her in a position of power. Legends of the most famous and feared community of women, the Amazons, were responsible for creating Artemis' powerful pre-eminence. This connection explains in part the fearsome and authoritative position Artemis holds in Ephesus: she is a warrior goddess, a mother, a creator, and the powerful source of the embodiment of divine strength.

Callimachus in his poem describes young Artemis' ten wishes, including these 4:

1. to be the Phaesporia or Light Bringer
2. to always remain a virgin
3. to be assigned any city, and only to visit when called by birthing mothers
4. to have the ability to help women in the pains of childbirth.

Virginity

- An important aspect of Artemis' persona and worship was her virginity.
- Artemis' virginity is related to her power and independence.
- The ancient cultural context in which Artemis' worship emerged also held that virginity was a prerequisite to marriage, and that a married woman became subservient to her husband.

Artemis is a goddess of totality

- Mother Goddess. She is a Royal Princess (Basileis), a goddess Of the First Throne (Protothronia), who reigns unmatched throughout the Mediterranean as Goddess Queen (Potnia Thea).
- She is the Savior (Sôteira), the Light Bringer (Phosphorus), the One Who Soothes (Hêmerasias).
- She rigorously protects her chastity which is reflected in her titles as Virgin or Maiden Parthenos, as well as Revered Virgin (Aedoeus Parthenos). Artemis is the Goddess for all peoples at all times in all places.
"THE ENDURING GODDESS: Artemis and Mary, Mother of Jesus" Carla Ionescu 2016

Artemis' temple

- Religious site
- Sacred-Conquerors of the city spared the temple out of piety for the goddess
- Museum/attraction- One of the 7 wonders of the world and became the major attraction of Ephesus and the foundation for its cultural life as well as commerce, trade, and tourism. Persian conquest of Ephesus in which according to Herodotus everything but the temple of Artemis was destroyed. As Herodotus records, "...The temple of Artemis was the only Greek temple spared by Xerxes."
- The Swiss Bank of its time "You know about the Ephesians, of course, and that large sums of money are in their hands, some of it belonging to private citizens and deposited in the temple of Artemis, not alone money of the Ephesians but also of aliens and of persons from all parts of the world, and in some cases of commonwealths and Kings, money which all deposit there in order that it may be safe, since no one has ever yet dared to violate that place, although countless wars have occurred in the past and the city has often been captured..." (Dio Chrysostom 31.54-55)
- It is a sanctuary served as an asylum for those who needed political, religious and/or physical protection. The right of asylum is said to originate in mythological times when the Amazons sought refuge in the sanctuary as they were being pursued by Dionysius and later by Heracles: "It is a fact that the women from the Thermodon, as they knew the sanctuary from of old, sacrificed to the Ephesian goddess both on this occasion and when they had fled from Heracles
- The world-renown Temple of Artemis became the major attraction of Ephesus and the foundation for its cultural life as well as commerce, trade and tourism. It is of international importance as well.

Ephesus and Artimus-she is the "Protector of the City"

And you see and hear how this fellow Paul has convinced and led astray large numbers of people here in Ephesus and in practically the whole province of Asia. He says that gods made by human hands are no gods at all. There is danger not only that our trade will lose its good name, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be discredited; and the goddess herself, who is worshiped throughout the province of Asia and the world, will be robbed of her divine majesty." When they heard this, they were furious and began shouting: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" Acts 19

Problems in Education in Greek, Roman and Jewish society of the time:

Jewish custom forbade women from conversing with men other than their husbands.

- Teachers, at first, had to be men, only men were educated in the faith
- Educating women would incite criticism from family members and community leaders outside the Church.
- Jewish sages declared that any man who spends too much time talking with women "will inherit Gehenna" (hell)

- Any man who taught Jewish women in the Church might be accused by their husbands of trying to break up marriages or might be told that he was going to hell for his efforts.

Greeks, when associating women with religion, would think of the religious temples, which had hundreds of prostitutes.

- Any man who taught Greek women in the Church might be accused of catering to sacred prostitutes, or of seeking to entice women to enter into this position within this new Eastern religion.
- Because of the potential scandals that might arise unfairly, in an attempt to educate women in the Church, Paul urged Christian women to dress modestly and adorn themselves with good deeds.
- A woman teaching a man would greatly upset social standards

Bristow, John Temple. What Paul Really Said About Women

God, the mission, the message, and culture have always interacted

B. Language: Words, Culture and Context

Word Meanings and time:

- **Meat:** The expression “meat and drink”? It comes from an older meaning of the word *meat* that refers to food in general — solid food of a variety of kinds (not just animal flesh), as opposed to *drink*-For if someone with a weak conscience sees you, with all your knowledge, eating in an idol’s temple, won’t that person be emboldened to eat what is sacrificed to idols? NIV vs KJV and many others “meat”
- **Awful:** Awful things used to be “worthy of awe” for a variety of reasons, which is how we get expressions like “the awful majesty of God.”
- **Nice:** Used to mean “silly, foolish, simple.” **Silly:** in earliest uses referred to things worthy or blessed; from there it came to refer to the weak and vulnerable, and more recently to those who are foolish. KJV 2 Tim silly women
- **Naughty:** Long ago, if you were naughty, you had naught or nothing. Then it came to mean evil or immoral, and now you are just badly behaved.
- **Stories and messages and culture-** Stories require nuances not just word translations. Translate a joke into another language and see if it is still funny, or even makes sense. Translate a story from 200 years ago.
- **Written material, emails and misunderstandings between what is meant and what is written.** How many texts and emails get misunderstood because of confusion about the full context?

Quietness = Hesuchia- Used twice by Paul, **1 Tim 2:11**, and **2 Th 3:12**:

- NIV: Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to **settle down** and earn the food they eat.
- KJV: Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with **quietness** they work, and eat their own bread.

Don’t be disruptive, settle down

The third time it’s used is in the setting of **Luke** in Acts 21:30-32, 22:2. Paul is in Jerusalem, the crowd is going crazy and in danger of a riot (something you never want in Roman occupied territories). Paul quiets them and speaks:

The whole city was aroused, and the people came running from all directions. Seizing Paul, they dragged him from the temple, and immediately the gates were shut. While they were trying to kill him, news reached the commander of the Roman troops that the whole city of Jerusalem was in an uproar. He at once took some officers and soldiers and ran down to the crowd. When the rioters saw the commander and his soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.....When they heard him speak to them in Aramaic, they became very quiet. (Stopped the uproar and listened)

Greek: *authenteō*

The word in I Tim. 2:12 variously translated “exercise authority over” or “domineer”. Based on this word alone, it is widely held that women may not lead men in any aspect of church life.

Consider these facts about *authenteō*.

- It is used only here in the New Testament, so we have no biblical parallels to help define it.
 - There are very few known examples of the word being employed prior to Paul’s use in 2:12. Most of the evidence is late, even centuries after the New Testament.
 - The scholarly community is deeply divided on its precise meaning in 2:12 and, therefore, how it should be translated into English.
 - Scholarly (and not so scholarly) opinions about its meaning in 2:12 not surprisingly often mirror the views many interpreters already hold on women in the church.
- Gary Burke

This latter phrase is one translation of a strange word, *authenteo*. It appears nowhere else in the New Testament. At one time this word described one who kills with his own hands (himself or another). Later, it was used to indicate how one may act on his or her own authority and dominate others in an autocratic manner. “Domineer” may be a good translation of *authenteo*. It is the opposite of the kind of spirit Paul commended to all Christians, of love and respect.

It is quite possible that Paul had in mind a certain woman or group of women in Ephesus when he wrote this passage. If so, Paul was not willing to lessen his insistence that women are to learn, in spite of the high-handed attitude of one or some. Instead, he wrote that they are to learn in quietness, without being rude or domineering.

Bristow, John Temple. What Paul Really Said About Women (pp. 71-73).

Greek: *anēr*

- Then there is the other ambiguity in I Tim. 2:12: “man”.
 - The word in this case is **singular**, not plural. Thus, it could be referring to “man” in some generic way or “a man” or even “husband” of these teachers.
 - We don’t know enough about these women who had been abusing their teaching role in the church in Ephesus.
- GB

We would make a massive leap that these two words, “*authenteō anēr*,” mean that no woman from that time forward may lead an adult male in any church activity within or out of the assembly. Not only have we harmed our sisters, but the church as a whole suffers from being deprived of this service.

GB

Greek (hupotagē) “To submit”

- The word translated “submissiveness” in 2:11 hupotagē is used only four times in NT, all of them by Paul.
- Cognate verb, Hupotassō (“to submit”) appears 5 times in Paul, 4 of these relate to married women’s **voluntary** submission to their husbands. The fifth occurrence is in I Cor. 14:34, where the context (“their own husbands,”) clearly indicates that wives, not women in general, are in view.
- Hupotassomenoi *Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.* Eph 5:21

Greek Hupotasso “To submit”

In non-military use, it was “a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden”.

The NAS New Testament Greek Lexicon

NT writers do not use the Greek verb (“to obey”) but instead use words that denote a voluntary deferring to another’s. The distinction is an important one. Obedience can be willingly or unwillingly given. Submission, on the other hand, is the voluntary act of a free agent.

Bellville, in Blomberg, Craig . Two Views on Women in Ministry

Gunē women/wives

- I Timothy 2, where there are already other indications that Paul is discussing wives, it is reasonable to assume Paul is using gunē here as he does in all other “submission” passages where he is referring to men and women/wives.
- The reference to these women’s (wives’) **submissiveness while learning** raises an additional question.
- To whom was their submissiveness to be addressed? Paul is not explicit about that. In fact, the situation here is the same as in I Cor. 14:34, where Paul does not tell us there either.

The reference to these women’s (wives’) submissiveness while learning raises an additional question. To whom was their submissiveness to be addressed? Paul is not explicit about that. In fact, the situation here is the same as in I Cor. 14:34, where Paul does not tell us there either. In the literature, several possibilities have been suggested, including:

- these wives’ submission to their husbands
- to the men in the congregation, to the leaders of the congregation
- to the designated teachers of the congregation
- or to the message being taught itself.

Without strong indicators in the context, perhaps it is best to say simply that these wives were to exhibit a submissive demeanor while learning and leave it at that.

GB

Context: Life Groups-House Church

Regarding the topic of home churches vs larger gatherings, Paul is almost always addressing house churches not a large auditorium. Home churches aren't the exception; they are the rule as far as who Paul is addressing.

- Rom 16-Greet Priscilla and Aquila...Greet also the church that meets at their house.
- 1 Cor 16:19-Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets at their house
- Philemon 2-to Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier—and to the church that meets in your home
- Col 4- to Nympha and the church in her house.
- Acts 16-After Paul and Silas came out of the prison, they went to Lydia’s house, where they met with the brothers and sisters and encouraged them.
- Acts 20-On the first day of the week we came together to break bread. Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight. There were many lamps in the upstairs room where we were meeting

Points:

- In his letters Paul describes the place where his communities gathered, most often with oikos/oikia (house)
- Small groups gathered together not just to sing, pray, and prophesy, but to “break bread”, have a meal together. Acts 20:7
- Most likely only ten to a dozen believers, plus children, met in typical households like Aquila and Priscilla’s.
- A meeting of the “whole church” in a more generous homes probably took place in larger upper rooms that contained a dining room with extra space. Even so it is difficult to imagine more than forty people at one of these gatherings.
- “Gaius, whose hospitality I and the whole church here enjoy, sends you his greetings”. Probably in Corinth and the hospitality suggests it was a large home of an eminent citizen.
- Church groups may have occasionally come together as a whole church and so 1 Cor 14:23 suggests it led to a problem of disorder and embarrassment to the gospel in the larger groups: *So if the whole church comes together and everyone speaks in tongues, and inquirers or unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are out of your mind? But if an unbeliever or an inquirer comes in while everyone is prophesying, they are convicted of sin and are brought under judgment by all, as the secrets of their hearts are laid bare. So they will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, “God is really among you!”*
- In Romans, no suggestion that Christians ever met as a “whole” in one place
- We have no evidence of early Christians meeting in more public locations
- Never during this period is the term church applied to the building. Not until 3rd century do we have evidence of special buildings being constructed for Christian gatherings. Pauls Idea of Community, RJ

Culture, Context, Conflict

- Scriptural Translation
- Culture
- Context
- **Conflict**- what is the problem. 1 Tim 2:8-10.
- **Application**: What did it mean to them, then figure out if/how it applies to us. Is the fix cultural, local, global, temporary, universal?

What conflict explains the whole of 1 Tim 2?

Therefore I want the men everywhere to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or disputing (?) I also want the women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, adorning themselves, not with elaborate hairstyles or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God.

A woman should learn in quietness (calm down) and full (voluntary) submission.

I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority(domineer) over a man; she must be quiet (nondisruptive, calm).

For Adam was formed first, then Eve(?).

- Creation order doesn't fit with authority/subordinate in pre-sin because God made Eve as the "helpmeet", the completion, the protector/savior.
- In creation order we have plants, animals, Adam, then Eve
- Is it about Ephesian culture and beliefs Artemis as first God of female superiority in spiritual knowledge?
- Is this a power play- Jewish male vs Artemis female claiming higher spiritual ground?

And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived (?) and became a sinner.

- Is this a reference against the Artemis beliefs that women are spiritually superior
- There is likely a cultural belief that women are more domestic and sheltered, less educated, and more gullible to deception-2 Tim 3:6-"gain control over gullible women"
- Eve in Jewish Tradition: A Diaspora Jewish text indicates: "But the woman first became a betrayer to him. She gave and persuaded him to sin in his ignorance. He was persuaded by the woman's words, forgot about his immortal creator, and neglected clear commands." Keener, Craig S.. Paul, Women, and Wives

But women will be saved through childbearing (?)—if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.

- Some say "Salvation by childbearing" is heresy, we are saved through the blood of Christ
- Paradox- Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man (Adam), and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned Rom 5:12
- Is this about punishment in Genesis and being saved after punishment?
- Is this a reference to how woman/mankind will be saved by the birth of child Jesus
- Is it to refute Artemis and "virginity as power" vs marriage/family/children?
- Is it pointing out that it is God that goes with a mother through childbirth, not Artemis?

Gnosticism – Gnosticism teaches that it isn't the flesh and the physical that are real. "Things of the flesh" and early pleasures are always evil. Maybe it is thru some of the women that Gnosticism is spreading. 2 Tim 3:6-gain control over gullible women. Ephesus and Gnostic false teaching likely forbade marriage, and the bearing children was seen an evil that kept the divine element in human beings trapped in fleshly bodies.

1 Tim 4:1-5 The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth. For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.

Various translations:

1 Tim 2:8-10 So, I want the men everywhere to pray, lifting up their hands in a holy manner [*their hands in reverence; holy hands*], without anger and arguments [*quarreling; disputing*]. Also [*Similarly; Likewise*], women should wear proper [*modest; respectable*] clothes that show respect [*modesty*] and self-control [*good sense*], not using braided hair [*elaborate hairstyles*] or gold or pearls or expensive clothes. Instead, they should do good deeds, which is right [*proper*] for women who say they worship God [*profess reverence for God*]. **Expanded Bible translation, EXB**

1 Tim 2:11-12- A woman should **learn** in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet. **NIV**

Let the isha (*wife*) **learn** in silence in all submission. I do not allow an isha (*wife*) either to have teaching authority over or to have hishtaltut (*domination, taking control*) over [*her*] man, but to be in silence. **Orthodox Jewish Bible**

Let a woman **learn** by listening quietly [*in silence*] and being ready to cooperate in everything [in full/all submission]. But I do not allow a woman to teach or to have [*assume; exercise*] authority over a man [or her husband], but to listen quietly [*be quiet*]. **EXB**

1 Cor 14:34- Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says. If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church. **NIV**

Let the wives remain silent when the congregation meets; they are certainly not permitted to speak out. Rather, let them remain subordinate, as also the *Torah* says; **Complete Jewish Bible**

For] God is not a God of ·confusion [*disorder*] but a God of peace. As is true in all the churches [*assemblies*] of God's people [*the saints; some commentators take this clause as part of the previous sentence*], women [or wives] should keep quiet in the ·church meetings [*churches; assemblies; the context here may be the evaluation of prophecy (v. 29), rather than general worship (where women presumably could speak; see 11:2–16)*]. [*For*] They are not allowed to speak, but they must ·yield to this rule [or be in submission; or keep their ordered place] as the law says [*perhaps Gen. 3:16, or a nonbiblical Jewish tradition*]. If they want to ·learn something [or ask questions], they should ask their own husbands at home. It is ·shameful [*disgraceful; improper*] for a woman (wife) to speak in the church meeting [*the assembly; church*]. **EXB**

Application-

- We won't always understand culture, context, translation or conflict
- We should be showing our brothers and sisters love and humility
- We have freedom but we act within cultures
- We are a leadership team for the world, we are that family unit
- We don't want to embarrass Christ or let our passion for either tradition or change stand in the way of advancing the Gospel within **EACH** culture

We all need regular reminders of the role presuppositions play in our interpretation, and we must moderate our opinions with healthy doses of humility. In short, we must agree to disagree at times

Craig Blomberg, NIV Commentary

This compilation of thoughts is pulled together from many resources. I've tried to capture as many as I remember. Apologies for any I left out. K Garner