**1 Timothy 2 – Appropriate Conduct in the Church**

**Looking Back:**

Last week, what did we identify as the purpose of this letter?

* Feel free to add an intro / discussion question.
* Rebuke against false teaching.
* To teach the importance being occupied by sound teaching that focuses on the Gospel as opposed to “useless chatter” and false teachings.

**Read 1 Timothy 2.**

1. In verses 1 to 4, what does Paul first encourage believers to do? For what reasons does he encourage them to do this?

* Pray for all people (including government/political leaders)
* “that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life in all godliness and dignity” (v.2)
* God wants all people to be saved and come to know truth, (v.3-4)

2. Remember the context of this letter is a rebuke for false teachings circulating in the Church at Ephesus. With this in mind, we turn to Paul’s individual instructions to men and women.

1. From verse 8, what can we assume was going on with the men in Ephesus? What does Paul want them to do instead (what posture should they have)?

* They were arguing and angry with one another – we can assume the useless chatter and false teachings led to arguments.
* Pray in every place – prayer should be central (not useless chatter and arguments)
* Lifting up holy hands – their hands should be holy and lifted in full submission to the Lord (not fists clinched and hearts impure in anger towards their brothers).

b) From verses 9-15 what can we assume is going on with the women in Ephesus? What are Paul’s instructions to the women to remedy the problem?

* Women are dressing immodestly and not exhibiting self-control
* They were adorning themselves more externally (with hairstyles, jewelry, clothing) than spiritually (with good deeds)

“Jewish women were generally unlearned… Without the opportunity to study Scripture, women in many parts of the first-century church were not qualified to teach. Newly liberated women were causing major social and domestic problems in the Roman Empire. In some settings they were brining disrepute upon the church… Paul desired orderly worship in the midst of freedom in Jesus Christ, which was a different kind of freedom. Thus, Paul’s teaching… should be understood within its respective historical contexts rather than as a general rule for all the churches throughout time.” (Zehr, 70)

* Because Jesus’ ministry radically included women and treated all as equals, many “newly liberated women” went to the opposite extreme and their behavior was both disruptive and immodest. They were teaching false things out of their ignorance and/or perhaps the deception of the wayward men (whom Paul first rebukes) who are teaching false things.

Women are to dress with modesty and exercise self-control (the latter ties with Paul’s call for women to be “quiet” – addressed below), focusing more on service to others than on their physical appearance.

* Women are to learn with a submissive and quiet demeanor.
  + In Ephesians 5:2 (a letter to the same church), Paul teaches that believers are to all “submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.” (NIV)
  + The word “quiet” (later “quietly”) is the same Greek word used in v. 2 “peaceful and quiet lives.” While it can mean literal silence, it more accurately carries the weight of a quiet, calm, and still demeanor – “description of the life of one who stays at home doing his own work, and does not officiously meddle with the affairs of others.” (bible.org)

*This Bile study does not directly address vv.13-15, but there may be questions asked in your group about these verses. There are a host of interpretations of what Paul is attempting to articulate here:*

* *Adam was first and then Eve was formed from Adam in the garden (where she was deceived first). But in childbearing, Eve or woman is first and then man (e.g. when a mother bears a son) and therefore in this woman is first. So as woman continues in faith and love and holiness with self-control she will be able to acquire the wisdom she needs to not be deceived (this wisdom will also come from the experience of child rearing), but she must first learn from man (who at this time is more learned than woman in Jewish culture).*
* *Others say that by “childbearing” Paul is referring to “The Childbearing” – Mary’s bearing of Jesus who ultimately broke the cures of the fall. Therefore women must fallow Christ in an appropriate manner to walk in that deliverance.*
* *The interpretation you and those in your group choose is not super critical as long as everyone understands that deliverance from deception and its consequences does not come through immodesty, a lack of self-control, or refusal to submit, but instead through humble submission to Christ and those he puts in authority.*

3. What is the motivation for all of these actions Paul encourages?

- v. 8: “I desire **then** that in every place the men should pray…” (ESV) – looking at the verses before:

- verses 5-6 talk about Jesus as our mediator between God and man

- Jesus has saved us from sin and lies

- Jesus calls us to teach faith and truth

-Continuing from last week, Paul focuses on people’s hearts (cultivating holiness, peace, modesty, self-control, good deeds)

- This question is another good opportunity to reflect on the Gospel

* The Gospel message (God’s grace saved sinners – all are sinners – through Jesus and now we rely on Holy Spirit to make us new, humbly and with love for one another).

1. What can believers today learn from what Paul taught the Church at Ephesus in 1 Timothy 2?

In lieu of useless chatter, believers should focus on prayer for all people and conducting themselves in holiness and faith with modesty, self-control, a quiet/still demeanor, and submissiveness in learning environments, following Christ in deliverance from the deceptions and false teachings into which humans so easily fall.

1. How will you apply this specifically to your life this week? Share with each other and pray for Christ to influence your heart in a greater way.