

“Should a Woman Teach?”; Session # 27 on the 2nd Commandment, presented in the Adult Sunday School on March 9th, 2014, by Pastor Paul Rendall.

Concerning Women praying in the Public Worship –

1st Timothy 2, verses 9-11 – “In like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works.” “Let a woman learn in silence with all submission.”

1st - Being adorned in modest apparel

Here, in public worship, the commandment to the woman is to come clothed in modest apparel; the kind of apparel that shows forth the fact that she is a godly woman who is intending with all of her heart to engage in good works, both in the church and outside. Before she comes to church she will be thoughtfully considering what would be appropriate to wear. There is no mention that pants cannot be worn or skirts should be of a certain length; but modesty is modesty. Any clothing which reveals parts of the body or so emphasizes parts of the body so that either men’s or women’s attention is drawn to it repeatedly is probably not being modest. I think that this is a good general rule; I will say no more. But this is important, as the attention of everyone in public worship should be upon what is being said by men during worship, more than what is being seen to impress others in a worldly or a fleshly sense. It ought to be obvious that the thoughts of men and women should both be being drawn to God during prayer and the preaching of the word.

2nd – She will be learning while praying in her heart

The women are likewise to pray, but not audibly in the public assembly. It is interesting that the Apostle states that a part of the reason for a woman’s being silent in prayer is so that she will learn. The prayers of the men will have aspects of teaching in them, not formally, but in the phrases and sentences which are used, the truth of God and His attributes, the truth of the sinfulness of the human heart, the truth of our continual need of grace, and our united desire for Christ’s kingdom to come and His will to be done, on earth as it is in heaven; these kinds of truths will be mentioned, and they do teach. Whether a woman is silently praying or silently listening she is, or should be, actively learning from the men who are praying and preaching if she is paying attention. Ladies, when you are paying attention to both the prayers of the men and the preaching of the pastor, desiring to learn with all of your heart the truths of God’s word which He has for you that day, this glorifies God. And you will grow more wise and mature as you listen and submit to God in this way.

3rd – The reasons why silence is commanded.

The women, we are told here in verse 11, were to learn in silence, and not to think that they should exercise whatever speaking gift that God might have given them, in the public worship. The apostle did not permit this, and he gives as 2 reasons for his not permitting women to teach or exercise authority.

The 1st Reason is found in verse 13 – “For Adam was formed first, then Eve.” In 1st Corinthians 11: 8, Paul says: “For man is not from woman, but woman from man.” “Nor was the man created for the woman, but woman for the man.” That was God’s intention in His design of

man and woman in the creation, that the woman was created for the man; specifically not to lead and to exercise authority, but to be his helper and to submit to him in accordance with her Biblically defined role in marriage and the family and in the church.

The 2nd Reason - Here, in regard to her being silent and not teaching in the public worship, Paul gives the additional reason that Adam (representing all men) was not deceived when he fell into transgression, there in the garden of Eden. But Eve (representing all women) was deceived and thus fell into transgression. Therefore, God through the Apostle Paul insists that she should show her forth her humility and submission by remaining quiet when in the public gathered assembly of the church. Adam was not deceived, but Eve was deceived into thinking that she was wise and that she could teach her husband, even after she had fallen from her original righteousness and eaten of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. She reasoned her way independent of her husband or the commandment of her God, into believing the lie of the devil, that she would not surely die if she ate of the fruit; rather she would become wise like God, knowing the difference between good and evil. When she ate of the fruit and did not immediately die physically, she gave some to her husband, probably with a wise note of triumph. She probably said something like: “You see,” Adam, “I did not die, and I feel as though I am wise already.” He then “listened to her voice” instead of God’s and ate and fell Himself into transgression. The lesson that Paul is inculcating is not that a woman may never teach, but that she should confine her teaching to role as being man’s helper. She was deceived, in regard to this once before in the Garden of Eden; she needn’t be deceived again if she will obey the Apostle Paul instructions here in these verses.

4th - Where may she teach and help her husband and her pastor?

A) In the home – Titus 2: 3-5

B) In the Sunday School and other places outside of the gathered public worship services of the church, under the authority of her husband and the church – Acts 18: 24-26

Her reward for fulfilling her submissive role in worship and in the home will be that she will truly find her fulfillment as a woman within the context of bearing children. If she continues in worshipping God in this way of humble submission, exercising faith and love and pursuing holiness with this Spirit-enabled self-control, she will fulfill entirely the purpose for which God created her.

Concluding Applications

1. It is very apparent from these verses that a woman should not be raised up and ordained to the public ministry of the church. Nowhere in the New Testament is any woman ever raised up to that position and these verses that we have studied today show us that it is not permitted by Apostolic example and command both. (1st Timothy 2: 12, and 1st Corinthians 14: 34)

2. It is also very apparent that our God expects, and the Apostle Paul greatly desired, that the men pray; that they do not say, “I cannot pray”, for they can learn to pray. The way that you learn to pray publicly is to pray publicly. To prepare for praying publicly, men, you should read the Scriptures, especially the Psalms, and the prayers of godly men in the Bible. In doing this, you will begin to form the conception of how you yourself can speak to God in prayer. You can practice for public prayer by learning to pray in secret audibly, even if it is only in a whisper in your bedroom, living room, or any other place where you can get alone. If you do not do this

now, you should be doing this, as the Bible commands secret prayer in Matthew 6: 6-8. In fact Jesus says, “When you pray”, not “If you pray”.

3. Ladies – Develop your prayer life in the way I have just described above; develop it in your heart in public worship, especially since you are commanded to be silent there. Do not feel as though the prayers of your heart do not count, or are not valued by God or listened to by Him when you speak them in your heart. Remember Hannah in 1st Samuel 1, who even though Eli misunderstood her while she was praying, God was hearing her very clearly. Let your heart rejoice that God who sees and hears in secret will reward you openly with answers to your prayers. (Matthew 6: 6)