

1 Timothy 2 - Silent Women in the Church

October 1, 2015

1 Timothy 2:11-15

11 **LET THE WOMAN LEARN IN SILENCE** (*hesychia* - quietness, doesn't meddle in other's affairs, stillness, quietness), **WITH ALL SUBJECTION** (*hypotage* - the act of subjecting, subordination).

12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, **NOR TO USURP AUTHORITY** (*authentain* - to use authority over, to act of oneself, acting on your own authority, exercise dominion over) **OVER THE MAN**, but to be in silence.

13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

15 Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.

The woman's behavior in the church is to be a reflection of her submission to her husband.

1 Corinthians 14:29-35

29 **LET THE PROPHETS SPEAK TWO OR THREE, AND LET THE OTHER JUDGE.**

30 **IF ANY THING BE REVEALED TO ANOTHER THAT SITTETH BY, LET THE FIRST HOLD HIS PEACE.**

31 **FOR YE MAY ALL PROPHECY ONE BY ONE, THAT ALL MAY LEARN, AND ALL MAY BE COMFORTED.**

32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

33 For **GOD IS NOT THE AUTHOR OF CONFUSION, BUT OF PEACE**, as in all churches of the saints.

34 **LET YOUR WOMEN KEEP SILENCE IN THE CHURCHES: FOR IT IS NOT PERMITTED UNTO THEM TO SPEAK; BUT THEY ARE COMMANDED TO BE UNDER OBEDIENCE, AS ALSO SAITH THE LAW.**

35 **AND IF THEY WILL LEARN ANY THING, LET THEM ASK THEIR HUSBANDS AT HOME: FOR IT IS A SHAME FOR WOMEN TO SPEAK IN THE CHURCH.**

PAUL IS ADDRESSING A SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCE IN THESE TWO CHURCHES THAT WE MAY OR MAY NOT ENCOUNTER TODAY, YET THE UNDERLYING PRINCIPLE STILL APPLIES.

TO PROPERLY UNDERSTAND THE MEANING AND APPLICATION OF THESE PASSAGES, ONE MUST UNDERSTAND THE:

1. Biblical context and comparison
2. first century synagogue and church
3. historical and cultural status and role of women

BIBLICAL CONTEXT AND COMPARISON

1 Corinthians 11:3-5

3 But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and **THE HEAD OF THE WOMAN IS THE MAN**; and the head of Christ is God.

4 Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head.

5 But **EVERY WOMAN THAT PRAYETH OR PROPHESETH WITH HER HEAD UNCOVERED DISHONOURETH HER HEAD**: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.

Titus 2:3-5

3 The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

4 **THAT THEY MAY TEACH THE YOUNG WOMEN** to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

5 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

Acts 18:24-26

24 And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.

25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

26 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: **WHOM WHEN AQUILA AND PRISCILLA HAD HEARD, THEY TOOK HIM UNTO THEM, AND EXPOUNDED UNTO HIM THE WAY OF GOD MORE PERFECTLY.**

1 Timothy 3:1-13

1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a **BISHOP**, he desireth a good work.

2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

8 Likewise must the **DEACONS** (*diakonos - attendant, waiter, servant, minister*) be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;

9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.

11 **EVEN SO MUST THEIR WIVES** (*gyne - a woman*) be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

NAS - "Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips but temperate, faithful in all

things.”

12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

13 For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Romans 16:1-16

1 I commend unto you **PHEBE OUR SISTER**, which is a **SERVANT** (*diakonos - attendant, waiter, servant, minister*) of the church which is at Cenchrea:

2 That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that **YE ASSIST HER IN WHATSOEVER BUSINESS SHE HATH NEED OF YOU**: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.

3 **GREET PRISCILLA AND AQUILA MY HELPERS IN CHRIST JESUS**:

4 Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

5 Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my wellbeloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ.

6 **GREET MARY, WHO BESTOWED MUCH LABOUR ON US**.

7 Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

8 Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord.

9 Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved.

10 Salute Apelles approved in Christ. Salute them which are of Aristobulus' household.

11 Salute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord.

12 Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord.

13 Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

14 Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them.

15 Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them.

16 Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.

THE FIRST CENTURY SYNAGOGUE AND CHURCH

http://www.bible-history.com/jesus/jesusThe_Synagogue.htm

"In the very beginning, believers in Jesus did not separate themselves from their fellow Jews. Like Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, and lesser-known groups, they seemed to form a new sect of Judaism-sometimes called "the Way"; and the first Christians preached in synagogues whose members shared many of the same beliefs and were already familiar with the Scriptures.

Later, as missionaries carried the Gospel out into the Greco-Roman world, services that included gentiles were initially held in synagogues; but soon there were churches specifically for gentile converts.

Soon, the gentile Christianity that grew out of the early churches began to predominate over the Jewish Christianity that was centered in synagogues."

ADAM CLARKE

"It is evident from the context that the apostle refers here to asking questions, and what we call dictating in the assemblies. It was permitted to any man to ask questions, to object, altercate, attempt to refute, etc., in the synagogue; but this liberty was not allowed to any woman. St. Paul confirms this in reference also to the Christian Church; he orders them to keep silence; and, if they wished to learn any thing, let them inquire of their husbands at home; because it was perfectly indecorous for women to be contending with men in public assemblies, on points of doctrine, cases of conscience, etc. But this by no means intimated that when a woman received any particular influence from God to enable her to teach, that she was not to obey that influence; on the contrary, she was to obey it, and the apostle lays down directions in chap. 11 for regulating her personal appearance when thus employed. All that the apostle opposes here is their questioning, finding fault, disputing, etc., in the Christian Church, as the Jewish men were permitted to do in their synagogues; together with the attempts to usurp any authority over the man, by setting up their judgment in opposition to them; for the apostle has in view, especially, acts of disobedience, arrogance, etc., of which no woman would be guilty who was under the influence of the Spirit of God."

Matthew 4:23

"And **JESUS WENT ABOUT ALL GALILEE, TEACHING IN THEIR SYNAGOGUES**, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people."

Matthew 10:17

"But beware of men: for **THEY WILL DELIVER YOU UP TO THE COUNCILS, AND THEY WILL SCOURGE YOU IN THEIR SYNAGOGUES**."

Matthew 13:54

"And when he was come into his own country, **HE TAUGHT THEM IN THEIR SYNAGOGUE**, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?"

Mark 1:21

"And they went into Capernaum; and **STRAIGHTWAY ON THE SABBATH DAY HE ENTERED INTO THE SYNAGOGUE, AND TAUGHT**."

Luke 4:16

"And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, **HE WENT INTO THE SYNAGOGUE ON THE SABBATH DAY, AND STOOD UP FOR TO READ**."

Luke 4:20

"And **HE CLOSED THE BOOK, AND HE GAVE IT AGAIN TO THE MINISTER, AND SAT DOWN. AND THE EYES OF ALL THEM THAT WERE IN THE SYNAGOGUE WERE FASTENED ON HIM**."

Luke 12:11

"And **WHEN THEY BRING YOU UNTO THE SYNAGOGUES, AND UNTO MAGISTRATES, AND POWERS,** take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say."

John 12:42

"Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, **LEST THEY SHOULD BE PUT OUT OF THE SYNAGOGUE.**"

Acts 9:1-3

1 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,
2 And **DESIRED OF HIM LETTERS TO DAMASCUS TO THE SYNAGOGUES,** that if he found **ANY OF THIS WAY,** whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.
3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:

Acts 9:20

"And **STRAIGHTWAY HE PREACHED CHRIST IN THE SYNAGOGUES,** that he is the Son of God."

Acts 13:2-5

2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.
3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.
4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.
5 And when they were at Salamis, **THEY PREACHED THE WORD OF GOD IN THE SYNAGOGUES OF THE JEWS:** and they had also John to their minister.

Acts 13:14-16

14 But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and **WENT INTO THE SYNAGOGUE ON THE SABBATH DAY, AND SAT DOWN.**
15 And after the reading of the law and the prophets **THE RULERS OF THE SYNAGOGUE SENT UNTO THEM, SAYING, YE MEN AND BRETHREN, IF YE HAVE ANY WORD OF EXHORTATION FOR THE PEOPLE, SAY ON.**
16 Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience.

Acts 13:42-45

42 **AND WHEN THE JEWS WERE GONE OUT OF THE SYNAGOGUE, THE GENTILES BESOUGHT THAT THESE WORDS MIGHT BE PREACHED TO THEM THE NEXT SABBATH.**

43 NOW WHEN THE CONGREGATION WAS BROKEN UP, MANY OF THE JEWS AND RELIGIOUS PROSELYTES FOLLOWED PAUL AND BARNABAS: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.

44 AND THE NEXT SABBATH DAY CAME ALMOST THE WHOLE CITY TOGETHER TO HEAR THE WORD OF GOD.

45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.

Acts 18:1-4

1 After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth;

2 And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them.

3 And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.

4 And **HE REASONED IN THE SYNAGOGUE EVERY SABBATH, AND PERSUADED THE JEWS AND THE GREEKS.**

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL STATUS AND ROLE OF WOMEN

THERE ARE MANY DISCREPANCIES IN THE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF WOMEN'S ROLE AND PARTICIPATION IN THE FIRST CENTURY SYNAGOGUES AND CHURCHES.

<http://www.bible-history.com/court-of-women/women.html>

"Rabbinic literature was filled with contempt for women. The rabbis taught that women were not to be saluted, or spoken to in the street, and they were not to be instructed in the law or receive an inheritance. A woman walked six paces behind her husband and if she uncovered her hair in a public place she was considered a harlot."

<http://www.bible-history.com/court-of-women/women.html>

"In ancient Israel the Jewish culture was one of the most male dominant cultures in the whole world. In ancient Judaism the woman only had rights in the home and even that was very limited. The man had authority over his wife and daughters establishing their activities and their relationships. Women were passed from the control of her father to the control of her husband with little or no say in the matter. They were sold for a dowry settlement usually when they came of age. The Mishnah taught that a woman was like a gentile slave who could be obtained by intercourse, money or writ (m. Qidd 1:1).

<http://www.bible-history.com/court-of-women/women.html>

"Women could not play a significant role in the synagogue...Women were only allowed to receive very little education on religion and the main religious instruction in the home was given by the man and not the woman. They could not be disciples of any great rabbi, they certainly could not travel with any rabbi."

HISTORICAL RECORDS AND ARCHEOLOGY STRONGLY SUGGEST THAT MEN AND WOMEN IN THE FIRST CENTURY WERE RELIGIOUS EQUALS AND THAT WOMEN COULD NOT ONLY ATTEND BUT PARTICIPATE, AND EVEN LEAD, IN THE WORSHIP CEREMONIES.

Professor Shmuel Safrai

<http://www.bibleheadquarters.org/WereWomenSegregatedintheAncientSynagogue.html>

"In the time of Yeshua there was no separation of the sexes in the synagogue and women could be counted as part of the ten individuals needed for a religious quorum. This allowed women to be much more active in the religious life of the community than they are today. According to halachah, in order to have a congregation, or Edah, a minimum of ten persons must be present."

halachah - Jewish religious laws derived from the Written and Oral Torah

Professor Shmuel Safrai

<http://www.bibleheadquarters.org/WereWomenSegregatedintheAncientSynagogue.html>

"Outside the land of Israel, archaeologists discovered an amazingly well preserved synagogue of the era. This mid-third-century BC synagogue also provides evidence that there was no separation of men and women in the ancient synagogue. In the synagogues, the congregants sat on two rows of plastered, tiered benches that surrounded the rectangular assembly hall on all four sides. There were no dividers along the benches or anywhere within the hall (and there was no gallery). This lack of dividers indicates that women were not segregated within the synagogue. Tiered benches lacking dividers were also part of the architecture of the first-century synagogue at Masada. In addition, the Masada synagogue had only one entrance. A single entrance means that women mixed with men when entering and leaving the synagogue."

Professor Shmuel Safrai

<http://www.bibleheadquarters.org/WereWomenSegregatedintheAncientSynagogue.html>

"As stated previously, in Yeshuas' time, women participated fully in the religious life of the community. This included participation in synagogue services and in the regular study sessions that were conducted in the synagogue's bet midrash (house of study). There was no separation of the sexes in synagogues and women could be counted as part of the required congregational quorum of ten adults. There was, however, one inequality. For social reasons, women were not allowed to read the Scriptures publicly."

<http://www.jewfaq.org/women.htm>

"Women have held positions of respect in Judaism since biblical times. Miriam is considered one of the liberators of the Children of Israel, along with her brothers Moses and Aaron. One of the Judges (Deborah) was a woman. Seven of the 55 prophets of the Bible were women (they are included in the list of biblical prophets)."

<http://www.jewfaq.org/women.htm>

The rights of women in traditional Judaism are much greater than they were in the rest of Western civilization until the 20th century. Women had the right to buy, sell, and own property, and make their

own contracts, rights which women in Western countries (including America) did not have until about 100 years ago. In fact, Proverbs 31:10-31, which is traditionally read at Jewish weddings, speaks repeatedly of business acumen as a trait to be prized in women (v. 11, 13, 16, and 18 especially)."
<http://www.jewfaq.org/women.htm>

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/jesuscreed/2013/03/07/women-in-first-century-synagogues/>

"During the Second Temple period in ancient Israel, women were able to actively participate within the larger society, both socially and religiously. Women served as leaders of synagogues, participated in ritual services, learned and taught Jewish law, were counted in a minyan, and from archaeological evidence, do not seem to have been physically separated from men during prayer. There was active participation of women in all facets of Jewish ritual life.

According to Shmuel Safrai:

'In the Second Temple period women were religiously the equals of men: ancient Jewish sources from the land of Israel and from the Diaspora show that women frequented the synagogue and studied in the beit midrash (study hall). Women could be members of the quorum of ten needed to say the "Eighteen Benedictions" ...and like men, women were permitted to say "Amen" in response to the priestly blessing.'

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/jesuscreed/2013/03/07/women-in-first-century-synagogues/>

"Archaeological evidence supports that women were not necessarily separated from the men in the synagogue. This is the result of no apparent evidence from any of the numerous synagogues that have been excavated that would seem to indicate men and women were required to sit separately."

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/jesuscreed/2013/03/07/women-in-first-century-synagogues/>

"Inscriptions discovered in ancient synagogues from the early centuries also testify to women having served in various leadership capacities throughout the Jewish world. These inscriptions include heads of synagogues (αρχισυναγωγος), leaders (αρχηγισσα), and elders (πρεσβυτερα and other parallels).[5] These inscriptions (in feminine conjugations) bear witness to the very public roles of women. Thus further proving that women were indeed active members within their spiritual communities."

<http://www.jerusalemerspective.com/2663/>

"In the time of Jesus there was no separation of the sexes in the synagogue and women could be counted as part of the ten individuals needed for a religious quorum. This allowed women to be much more active in the religious life of the community than they are today.

The modern custom of separating men and women in the synagogue is perhaps due to the influence of Islam, from approximately the seventh century C.E. onward."