1 Timothy 2 • Instructions for Men and Women in the Church

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Father, as we get into this chapter, we want to open our hearts to the ministry of Your Holy Spirit to speak words of grace and insight. And Lord we yearn for You, so we look to You, Lord, to replenish us, to refresh our hearts, to fill us with hope, life, and direction. We ask it, Lord, in the authority that has been granted us through the name of Jesus our Savior, amen.

All right, I'm going to read through the chapter here first, and then we're going to go back and unpack these verses. It's really—chapter 2 isn't tremendously long. Here we go.

"First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, [2] for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. [3] This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, [4] who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. [5] For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, [6] who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. [7] For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth."

[8] I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling; [9] likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, [10] but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works. [11] Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. [12] I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. [13] For Adam was formed first, then Eve; [14] and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. [15] Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control." (ESV)

Paul you'll remember, and we cover this in chapter 1, Paul had left Timothy there an Ephesus to facilitate the ongoing work of the churches that needed to be taken care of. The things that involve raising up leaders and organizing the

fellowship in the things of primary importance. And that's why Paul begins this chapter by saying, *"First of all, then…"* And that's an important thing that we should take note of, *"First of all."* And the word first there doesn't mean first in order. It means first in importance.

And so what is he saying is first in importance? Well, he breaks it down and very simply, in a word, it's prayer. He says that it involves things like *"supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings."*

I've been having the opportunity to do something I had never gotten to do in 40 years of pastoral ministry, and that was, visit other churches. And I got to tell you, it's been fun and it's been interesting. And one thing I've noticed is that some of you guys are really good at getting the people excited about praying.

Pastor Chuck used to say to us in our regional conferences, get your people praying and keep them praying. And this is, Paul says, is of first importance. This is, he says, *"First of all,…"* of first importance, I want you to get the people praying.

I got to say something. In my pastoral ministry, I stunk at getting people praying. I just, I somehow just kind of lacked the ability to get people excited about coming. I always knew if I was going to have a prayer service, it was going to be the least attended thing that we did in a given week, month, or year or something like that. But it is still important.

And in our prayer times, Paul then lists these four elements that should take place. And by the way, we're talking about, we're not just talking about sending people off into their prayer closet. Paul is addressing the church here. He is talking about coming together in prayer as the body of Christ. And he says that those times should include supplications, which is not a word that I typically use in a given day. And I doubt you do as well. It's petitions. A supplication is to petition God.

He says that our prayer time should be involved with all kinds of prayers. And he uses that word in a very broad sense to cover really just communicating with God. He says that it should involve intercessions, which of course are specific prayers on behalf of others.

And then he said it should involve thanksgiving, which of course is all about, turkey and stuffing. No. It's that, it's giving thanks. And there should always be an element of praise, always an element of thanksgiving in our times of prayer.

And again, although all of these things are applicable to a person's private prayer life, it is generally believed that these things are being directed toward those public times of prayer when we get the body of Christ together.

And who are we to pray for when we come together? Well, Paul starts, you'll notice in verse 1, he, exhorting us that prayer might be lifted up for *"all people,..."* Your Bible may say, all men, but the Greek word there is anthrópos, which most often in the Bible is that general term for mankind.

And so he says that in terms of prayer, the idea here is to cover people. Be sure that you're covering the needs. And the assumption here is that you're going to be praying for the needs that are—have kind of risen to the top. You probably can't, you can't pray for all people, in any particular one setting, but those prayer needs that are brought to your attention, be sure that you're praying for those things.

And, today we have an opportunity to do this in other ways. I don't know how many of you guys are using technology to generate prayer within your fellowships. But email's been around for a long time and when I was pastoring, of course we had an email group that people could send a single email to, and it would go out to all of the people who were subscribed. And of course they would share lots of prayer requests over that. And that's a great way to do it. Some of you have Church software that you've connected to that has a module for getting the body to communicate with one another as it relates to prayer. And those are all good things too.

But Paul adds here you'll notice after this exhortation to pray for all people. He says that we also should be praying *"for kings in all who are in high positions,..."* And you got to remember, and please don't forget that when Paul penned these words, there was no such thing as a Christian politician. They didn't exist.

Nero was the Caesar at this particular time, the emperor, and he was literally going insane. Literally. I mean, can you imagine somebody praying or encouraging you to pray for a politician who is mentally insane to the point where this guy eventually, started putting Christians on stakes and setting them on fire to light up his garden. This is the guy under whose rule, Paul will eventually be beheaded. And yet Paul is calling for the body of Christ to pray for this guy and for other leaders. And these are all Pagan leaders.

We're praying to put Christians in political offices and that's a good thing. I don't have any problem with that at all. But imagine that there are none, nobody

is proclaiming the Gospel in that sort of a public way. There are no politicians that are, that even understand the Gospel, let alone can get up and talk about it. And Paul says, we need to be praying for these people, right? Pray for our leaders. Because it's just too easy, to complain. And I've been guilty of it just like you.

It kind of makes us wonder, if we'd have taken the time that we were spending complaining and we'd have been praying instead, how much of a difference could that have possibly made? But we need to be praying for our political leaders, and I know many of you are doing that.

And then he lists the reasons for praying this way in verses 3 and 4. And the very first reason he says is, *"This is good,…"* And I like that. Good is a good word. It, the Greek literally means, it's the right thing. It's the right thing to do, and it means honorable. Here's why we're going to pray for our leaders.

Here's why we're going to pray for people. Here's why we're going to spend time in petition and intercession because it's honorable, it's good, and it's the right thing to do.

He says it's good, and then he says *"it is pleasing…"* Your New King James version says, acceptable, *"in the sight of God our Savior,…"* It pleases God. It's acceptable in His sight when we rally the body of Christ to pray. I don't know, but I'm sure you want to do things that are acceptable and pleasing to God. Get your people praying. And the end of verse 3 is just really an elaboration of the Greek word for good. He says it's good and then he elaborates.

And then he gives us another reason for spending time in prayer in verse 4, he says, *"who"* speaking of God, *"who desires all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth."* And I like this statement very much because not only does it define the reason for our prayers, but it also clarifies a pretty nasty sticking point with our Calvinist brothers and sisters as it relates to salvation. Because Paul says very clearly, God *"desires all people to be saved."* And if you come back at me and you say that, all people, means the elect, we're going to have an argument because you're playing games with the Word of God.

Paul is very simply saying that God wants all people to be saved. And if somebody comes back and they say, well, yeah, all people means the elect, well what they've basically told me is that they are using their doctrine to shape the Word of God rather than using the word of God to shape their doctrine, and that is what we are supposed to be doing.

The Word of God shapes our doctrine. We don't go into reading our Bible with a preconceived, doctrinal platform in place. We go in with a slate, a blank slate, and we look at the Word of God and we accept it for what it says. And what it says is, God *"desires all people to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth."* Simple as that. And I like that fact.

And frankly, this is one of those things that Paul or excuse me, the Scripture reiterates. I'm sure most of you guys are familiar with 2 Peter, chapter 3, verse 9. I'll read it for you. It says,

2 Peter 3:9 (ESV)

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, (here's the point) *not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.*

Again, that 2 Peter 3:9. Simple fact, guys, God wants all people to be saved. Everybody. Now, does everybody get saved? No, unfortunately not. But God wants all people to be saved. And by the way, that's why we pray for everyone because God cares about everyone and He wants them to be saved.

Verse 5, he says, *"For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men,…"* He defines that mediator, *"the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time."* And these 2 verses are vital to the Gospel that we convey, obviously.

But they also slammed the door shut on the belief that anyone else can function in that mediatorial role. It's done. It's, and he says there's one, *"one mediator between God and men."* And you guys know that a mediator is someone who speaks on your behalf to someone who's in charge. There's just one, and it's *"the man Jesus Christ."* And of course we, that means we cannot subscribe to the idea that Mary or any of the Roman Catholic Saints play any sort of a mediatorial role. We just can't do it. We can't do it because the Word of God forbids it.

Paul goes on in verse 7. He says, *"For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle* (he says) *(I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth."* And so he says all these things for the sake of the

Gospel, he says, I was appointed. And the Greek word literally carries the connotation of something having been laid at your feet.

Paul says, I had these things laid at my feet to become an apostle, to also be a preacher and to teacher. And we don't usually have much trouble understanding that definition of an apostle. We know that it's one sent forth. But you know, what's really interesting is that it and I think somewhat lesser known, is the difference between preacher and teacher. I've noticed in the past that there are a good many believers who struggle to articulate any sort of a difference between the idea of preacher and teacher.

In fact, I even had a Christian say to me one time, well, it's the same thing. And I came back and said, well, actually it's not. My wife says to me over and over again, Paul, you don't have to teach and correct everybody. But it's the gift of a teacher where that's just what we don't we? And it, it bugs people, but preacher and teacher are given to us in the Scripture using two very different words in the Greek. And the literal translation of the word that is rendered, preacher in your Bible, is a herald. Someone who heralds a message.

And so a preacher is one who in, in particularly in its verb form, it means to proclaim. So to herald, or to proclaim, or to exhort? Think it, almost like those of you guys who were in sports. When you got into the locker room with the coach, maybe at halftime or something, or before the game, and the coach was giving you a good, pep talk and that's that job of the preacher. He's talking, he's saying, Jesus is our Lord. We can do this. Let's walk this out. And there's not instruction going on at that point. It's exhortation that is primarily made up in this whole idea of, to preach, right?

On the other hand, the word that is translated teacher is didaskalos in the Greek, and it means one who gives instruction. So this is not the exhortation element of things. This is the instruction side of things. And this is what it means to break down the Word. To go through the Scripture chapter by chapter and verse by verse. Preaching is a different thing.

Now, we ought to do both when we get up on a Sunday morning or a Wednesday night. We teach through the passage but we exhort the people. That's that application part where we're bringing the Word to the place of their daily life, walking it out, living it out, and so forth. So that's the difference. And that's why, and Jesus did the same thing. You look through the Gospels, you're going to see that He taught and He preached. He did both of those things.

And then he continues concerning prayer in verse 8 saying, *"I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling;"* Now you need to know something about the word, men here. This is the Greek word that differentiates males from females. He's talking to the guys here now, okay. Earlier it was mankind, but this is different.

And so he begins to speak now to the men, and he talks about the proper character of those who are doing the praying. And he says, first they *"should pray lifting holy hands."* And he is not talking so much about the physical act of raising hands as much as he is the idea that the hands that are being raised are set apart to God. Holy hands, that's the key. It's not just, I want guys to raise their hands. I want them to raise holy hands. I want them to raise hands that are devoted, set apart to God, and so forth. And he's talking about a true and genuine devotion to God.

Next he says, concerning those times of prayer for the man, he says, I want that times of prayer to be *"without anger."* And that's an important statement. Your Bible may say, without wrath. And as James reminds us, man's anger does not bring about the righteousness of God. (James 1:20) And that's why our prayers should not include that heart that comes before the Lord with a heart of anger. That's not going to, it's not going to get the job done. It's not going to get people saved. It's not going to draw people to the cross.

You hear about these angry preachers, on the street corner, shaking their fist or something like that. I don't know if I've ever seen one of those. I've just heard about them, but I don't know. I've always thought to myself, is that really effective? The Bible says it is His kindness that leads us to repentance. (Romans 2:4) So he says, I want guys to pray without anger or without wrath.

And then he goes on and finally says that our prayers should be without quarreling, and again, your Bible may say without doubting. And obviously we are to pray without doubting. And Jesus told us that. But I think the context here favors the rendering as he's talking earlier here about angry participants or coming with a heart that is angry. It favors the render if quarreling.

I don't want you guys to come together in your prayer times with anger and quarreling and the things that are, that's going to be counterproductive. So he says, leave that at the door. Just come to the cross related to those things, and when you come in prayer, I want you to your heart to be clear of those things.

You'll remember that Jesus exhorted us in that same way. He said, if you're going to offer your gift at the altar, and there you remember that your brother

has something against you, just drop it, and go to your brother and get that thing resolved, and then come back and make your offering.

And I think that there's something that we can apply as it relates to prayer and what Paul is saying here to come to the Lord in prayer without anger and without quarreling. And if there's issues, get those issues resolved so that our prayer time is going to be effective. And that's really, what he's implying here. We want our prayer time to be effective so don't come with of a heart of anger and quarreling with brothers and all the things that cause division and so forth. Come with a heart that wants to be one because otherwise our, our prayer time is just going to be a waste of time.

Peter more than implies that prayers can be ineffective if there's issues. You'll remember in 1 Peter 3, he talks to husbands. Particularly he exhorts husbands, and he tells them, I want you guys to be treating your wives in an understanding way, and I want you to honor her as the weaker vessel, and so on, and so forth. Heirs with you of the grace of life. But then he says this, so that your prayers may not be hindered, right? So that your prayers won't be hindered. Get along with your wife. Treat her in a godly and gracious way so that nothing hinders your prayers. Hey, that's another motivation to go and get this issue squared away with your wife right away. I don't want anything hindering my prayer, do you? I don't want and we don't want our gathering times of prayer to be hindered as well.

Okay. Verses 9 through the end, Paul just talks here about women, so let's close in prayer so… I'm kidding. We have to deal with these. Here we go. Are we all prayed up? All right, here we go.

Verse 9, *"likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, [10] but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works."*

Remember this, Paul's not writing this to the church at large. He's writing this to Timothy who's going to convey these things to the body of Christ. And so Paul is exhorting Timothy as it relates to these issues concerning women, and he begins by saying that they ought to have their clothing match their devotion.

And one of the things my wife likes to say, and I have always thought this was good, she said, what she'll say to women is, do you want to stand out for Jesus or do you want to stand out for other reasons that maybe have to do with sexual appeal or something like that. I mean, if a woman wants to stand out, I think she

knows how she can dress as it relates to catching a man's attention. But if she wants to stand out as a godly woman in a world in which we live, it's not hard. Just dress modestly and she will stand out just for following this basic guide, this basic guideline.

Now, you'll notice that he makes references here to braiding of hair, wearing jewelry, and stuff like that. We forget that things like jewelry and the way a woman wore her hair, those things had huge cultural implications back when Paul was writing this letter to Timothy. You and I, we see a woman with her hair braided and we don't even think twice. Most of us wouldn't even notice, oh, she braided her hair. Probably just means she wanted to get it out of her way.

You see maybe a young mother or somebody doing this because they're tired of their hair falling in their face every time they look down at their child or something like that. We don't even think about it. And it's the same thing with jewelry, even though, I mean, if it's done modestly and tastefully, it's nice. And we don't think of it as improper, ungodly, immoral, or anything like that today.

If a woman is just wearing a modest necklace or something, we think, yeah, it looks pretty, goes with her outfit, or something like that. That's what the women would say. Guys, don't, we don't use outfit. I've never once said to a guy that's a nice outfit, never once. Or never have I said to another guy, do you want to go to the mall and look at outfits? Just never done that. So jewelry can be worn in an inappropriate sort of a way but in, in most cases.

Paul is just exhorting Timothy to speak to the women about being modest, being tasteful and having their clothing and adornment simply match their godliness. Peter expresses it in 1 Peter 3. I know I'm quoting Peter a lot because he echoes a lot of these things. He says in chapter 3,

1 Peter 3:3-4 (ESV)

Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear— but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious.

Do not let your adorning (he says to, now he's talking directly to the women and what he says is, don't *let your adorning*) *be external"* And I think that's a really good commentary on what Paul is exhorting as it relates to Timothy. Don't let your adorning be merely external. And then he goes on to talk about, the things that are just all about the outside. The *"...gold jewelry,* (and) *...the clothing...,"* and so forth.

Peter goes on to explain, let your beauty be inward, right? He says, let it be that *:that hidden person of the heart.”* That imperishable beauty. Boy, Hollywood needs to learn that secret. Of course, it's lost on them. There is an imperishable beauty.

The Bible tells us that beauty does fade, right? We learned that in Proverbs 31, but there is such a thing as an imperishable beauty for a woman and it's godliness. When a woman is godly, I don't care how old she gets, she's still beautiful. And you can see it. You can see the beauty of a godly woman and that's what Peter is exhorting.

And again, I feel like this is a great commentary on what Paul is saying. Let, he says, and Peter even goes on to describe that godliness. He calls it a gentle and quiet spirit. Right. Isn't that beautiful? He says, which is a very precious, it's a very precious thing in God's sight, that sort of a thing. And he goes on to say, that's how the holy women, of the past used to adorn themselves with godliness, gentleness, quietness.

And we'll talk about quietness here as we go on, because in verse 11, this is where Paul says, *“Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness.”* The New King James says, *“let a woman learn in silence.”* And you'll notice that's a difference. That's different from what the ESV says.

And the reason I bring these things out is because you need to know that in your church, you've got some people sitting there with an ESV or an NIV or a New American Standard Bible (NASB), and you need to be knowing that these words are different because otherwise they're going to have a big question mark when you simply talk about what one particular translation says and theirs says something different. And they're going to like go, oh, that's interesting. That's different.

Because if you look at the word here in the new King James, *“Let a woman learn in silence.”* And the ESV says, *“Let a woman learn quietly.”* Those are two different things that's different. And it's important that you and I be aware of those things.

I will say that the word quietness seems to be in agreement with what we just quoted from Peter when he said that a woman's beauty should come from a gentle and quiet spirit. But you know what? The word silence can also be backed up because Paul did use the word silence elsewhere as it relates to a woman.

You'll remember in 1 Corinthians chapter 14, he said, women should keep silent in the churches. But you got to also remember that was where Paul was addressing the issue of women disrupting the service by asking questions of their husbands. And that's why he went on to say they should wait and ask their husbands at home and not disrupt the service so there should be silence.

Anyway, you can look at these things and see that there are some differences here and it's important that we look at them and understand them. Those aren't the really tough verses.

Verse 12 goes on and Paul says, *"I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet."* And once again, we come to a verse that is just too easy to be misunderstood.

It is amazing to me, in fact, well, I don't know how amazing it is. Sometimes it seems that way. How many people will read a verse like this and come away with the idea that women may not teach under any circumstance because people read things, they read them out of context. They don't read or interpret it through the matrix of the rest of God's Word. And so they come away and they say, well, there you go. 1 Timothy, chapter 1 verse, or chapter 2 rather, verse 12. Women are not allowed to teach. That's it. There we are. So we don't allow women to teach under any circumstances. And they forget that in Titus, Paul writes to Titus Exhorts him to tell the older women, to teach the younger women about godliness and so forth.

Paul is not saying that women may not teach. In fact, if you remove his words about teaching in this passage, and you read the verse with what remains, what you get is, I do not permit a woman to exercise authority over a man. And the reason, Paul— I believe that's an accurate way to read the essence of what Paul means in this verse. And what he was forbidding and what he was not forbidding is because we understand that when someone takes up the role of a teacher, they are exercising authority over their students. That's just the fact of the matter.

Every student willingly, subordinates themself to the teacher. Every time you get up to teach everybody in your congregation is subordinating themself to you. They're submitting themself to your teaching authority. If they didn't think you possessed that authority, they probably wouldn't be sitting in your church. But they recognize that there's a gifting and a calling upon your life to teach the Word of God. And so they're willingly subordinating themself to that gifting.

And so the reason that he says, I don't allow women to teach and to take up that role of authority over a man is because it reverses the order that God created in marriage between a husband and a wife, and we're not going to do that in the church. That's what Paul's saying.

God created order in the marriage. Sometimes we question that order from the standpoint that we look at our wives and we see how incredibly capable these women are. And I married a particularly capable woman. I didn't realize that when she was 17 years old and we got married, but we've been married 47 years and I have had wonderful opportunities to witness her capabilities. And I many times I have said to the Lord, I think she should be the leader because she has these abilities that I just don't possess in so many areas.

And yet God created an order in the home and that order is outlined for you and me in Ephesians chapter 5. You guys know it in verse 23, where Paul writes:

Ephesians 5:23-24 (ESV)

For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. (and he says) *Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.*

Why? Because he's so perfectly capable? No, it's because God ordained him and she is responding to the Lord's ordination of her husband, right? And so she is respecting the Lord when she honors, respects, and submits to her husband. I've had women say to me, I'll respect him when he is respectable. I say, well, honey, you might be waiting a while because, sometimes we don't always convey that sort of a thing on an everyday basis.

But the fact of the matter is you, before you are ever ordained into whatever area of ministry God gave you in the church, God ordained you first in the home. I say that every time I actually do a wedding. By the way, my youngest son is getting married this Friday and I'm going to talk about that and like I do in all the weddings, and I'm going to say this is more than just a wedding. My son is going to be taking on a role that goes beyond just husband. He's going to be taking on a leadership role. He will be ordained on Friday as the head of his home. Right. That's a God-given ordination. It's not something that we picked.

We men, we don't go around saying, that we're the leader and because I said so. We're the leader because God said so. And there are many times we don't feel very adept at leading. There are many times we don't feel like, we have what it takes to be a good leader, and yet it doesn't matter. God ordained us. And that's what Paul is saying here in Ephesians chapter 5. God has given the husband that position of leadership in the home. And when a woman takes up the role of a teacher, she effectively reverses that order by causing her husband to now submit to her authority.

Have you ever run into a woman who just didn't understand this concept at all? I think I've shared with you guys even in the past. I, many years ago I was counseling a couple and I was saying, well, what's going on in your marriage, there? I knew there was some sort of an issue and she said, well, I've been trying to teach him what it means to be a Christian man, but he just doesn't get it. And I said, why are you teaching him anything? That's not your place and it's never going to be taken well. Because all you're going to do is whip him down into this little submissive puppy. And that's not the man you want. You want him to be a leader, but you want to be the one to teach him to be a leader. That's wrong. That's not going to happen. Right? He's got to take up his role as a God-given role.

And so Paul is basically saying, we're not going to violate this because this is important. And he goes on to then cite the creation order in verse 13, he says, *"For Adam was formed first, then Eve; [14] and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor."*

And by the way Paul's mention of Eve being the first to fall into sin has caused many I would say many to believe that women are more susceptible to deception than their male counterparts. Personally, I wouldn't say that in a room full of women, but honestly here's the funny thing. My wife believes that. My wife believes that women are more susceptible to deception.

And she has gotten to the place after her years of ministry, which are just as many as mine. Where she would not allow a woman to come in and teach the women at Calvary Chapel Ontario unless that woman was under the headship of her husband. In other words, she wouldn't let a woman come in and teach who had an unbelieving husband. She wouldn't do it because she believed and believes to this day very strongly, that, that woman needs the authority of the headship of her husband to keep her centered. And that's what she believes. And so it's interesting.

Well now we come to this final statement of the chapter, and this is frankly where the challenge really comes in because Paul says in verse 15, *"Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control."* And honestly, guys, there are several things in this one single verse that are going to cause issues for any student of the Bible as they look at this.

And one of the first mysteries is why Paul begins by saying, *"Yet she will be saved…"* And then he changes the pronoun to they, you'll notice is he finishes his thought. Did you catch that? Starts off with she ends with they. And that's, and I'll just tell you right now, that's a bit of a mystery.

And probably the biggest challenge in this verse is Paul's use of the word, saved When he says *"Yet she will be saved"* and then goes on to say "through childbearing…" Because guys, this is the common word for saved. It's sózó in the Greek. And it can refer to physical, being physically saved. And it can refer to being spiritually saved. And interestingly enough, it is more often in the Gospels used of physical salvation, and it is more often in the epistles used of spiritual salvation. But there are both in either Gospel or epistle.

So we're forced to ask here: Is Paul saying that a woman's participation in childbearing actually affects her eternal salvation? In other words, what we're asking is the word saved here being used from that standpoint of spiritual salvation. And of course if someone translated it that way, that would be a problem on several fronts. Would it not? Because first of all, it puts a woman's salvation squarely in the arena of works. Well, we know that's a problem. Because, and this is the second point, it would directly contradict the Word of God, particularly the writings of this same apostle as he wrote to us in Ephesians chapter 2 verses 8 and 9, and made it abundantly clearer that our salvation is not by works. In fact, there's nothing that we can boast about as it relates to our salvation.

My wife, when she talks about her childbearing, she gave me four children. Let me tell you something. She's got something to boast about because I was there. Now let me tell you, I would not want to push out one of those kids. Phew! Mercy! It was hard to watch. And that says nothing about what she went through. And I thank her.

Even, our oldest one is, our oldest child is I think 42, our youngest is 28. And I thank her from time to time. Honey, thank you for pushing out those kids for me. First, you cooked them for each nine months and then you pushed. And I was there and I watched it happen and she's got something to boast about. But

that's not about salvation, is it? There's nothing to boast about. Paul tells us there's no boasting as it relates to salvation.

Alright, so we know here that this is not going to, this is not going to help. So when we interpret Scripture by Scripture, which by the way is the first rule of biblical interpretation. The very first rule, let Scripture interpret Scripture. So we know, obviously, that he's not talking about salvation.

So what is Paul saying? Well, I got news for you. If you turn to the commentators, which I love to do. You're not going to get any help, none. In fact you read the commentaries on this, and what they'll do is they'll say, there are 3 or 4 popular interpretations to this verse. And then they'll go through and they'll list them and then they'll be done and move on to the next chapter. And they don't come to any sort of a conclusion as it relates to what the thing does say.

And that can be really challenging, particularly for you and me as Bible teachers, because we want to be able to go to the people and say, here's what this means. I mean, that's in our spiritual DNA as a Bible teacher. We don't want to just wig out on things and go, I don't know. It could mean this, it could mean that, I'm not really sure. Let's close in prayer. It just doesn't work very well.

One popular position is to emphasize the Greek phraseology in this verse where Paul says she will be saved through childbirth, and actually the Greek says, she will be saved through the childbirth. We have that definite article before the word childbirth. And that has led many to interpret that as not the childbirth that she necessarily participates in, but ultimately the childbirth that gives birth, if you will, to the Messiah through whom we will all be saved. But again, that interpretation is an effort to make sózó refer to spiritual salvation. Right.

I mean, I could tell you the other interpretations that have been raised over the years, but the problem with all of them is you read them and you go, huh? That's, I'm not, still not really satisfied. And, interesting, but not satisfying.

And so as a Bible teacher, what should you do when you're facing a passage in the Bible like this one that is clearly very challenging because this is not the only one. I've taught through the whole Bible 3 times and started on a fourth, and I'm telling you, there were verses that I ran into and I know you have too that are challenging, and we can't just gloss over them.

So what are we going to do? Well, I think it is always best to stick to context. I mean, I think it's a good rule of thumb. And I already mentioned, that the first rule of biblical interpretation is always interpreting the Word of God with the Word of God. And that is so important. But context is also so incredibly important in any given passage, particularly when things get hard.

And I found that when people come and they ask me Bible questions, they'll always isolate a verse, and they'll say, pastor Paul, what do you think about? Or how do you explain? Right, right. And they'll rattle off a verse or even a portion of a verse. And there are a lot of times you're, even as a Bible teacher, you're stuck because, you're teaching through 1 Samuel right now and they're asking a question out of the Book of Revelation. And you're just not there. This is not, I was there 6 months ago, but now I'm over here, so now I'm just not.

I found out the best thing that I can do is say, okay, let's open up our Bible and let's read that passage. In fact, let's read all around that verse. And there's so much clarity that comes out of that, when you read a verse in its context, you can go, oh, okay, I see what he's getting at here. Or, I see what's happening. Right? Here's the explanation when you understand it in the context.

Now, what's the context of Paul's statement here in verse 15? Well, he is been talking about the roles of men and women. He started off by saying men, and again, the Greek word was for males. Here's how I want you guys to pray. Here's the character. Here's the way, this, I'm talking to you guys now.

And then he shifts. He says, now let's talk about women, Timothy, and let's talk about the issues related to women. Let's talk about, their subordination to their husbands. And let's talk about the order that we're going to maintain within the church, and let's talk about these things as it relates to women and the creation account.

And that's something else we see from the context of this passage. Did not Paul go back and look at creation? Did he not go back and cite creation as he's talking about these issues? Yes, he did and Paul's a man who knew the Scripture.

He knew that in the creation account, when the woman fell, there was a particular statement that the Lord made to the woman related to her actions. And what were her actions? Well, mostly she stretched out and took a role of leadership. She took the fruit that was forbidden. She ate of it. She gave some to her husband who followed her lead. And so you see that this is all coming

together from the standpoint of the context of what Paul is teaching here as it relates to the roles of women, particularly in the church and that sort of thing.

And Paul knew and understood that what God said to the woman in the creation account, He said, your desire is going to be for your husband. And by the way, what that means is your desire is going to be contrary to your husband. That's the literal meaning. It doesn't mean she's going to like you. It means she's going to have a desire that is going to be contrary to you. But then He went on to say, but your husband's going to rule over you.

So here's the deal. The Lord is telling Eve in that curse in the garden, that for even, for all the women who are going to come after her, there is going to be this inborn struggle to master her husband.

Here's the point, even though a woman desires to rule over her husband and that desire crops up. I've told you guys before that, even though I've been married 47 years, the first 5 years of my marriage were really not that great. And we weren't walking with the Lord. We did not attend church. We both had a flirtation with Jesus in our younger years, got married really as practical, functioning unbelievers, even though we believed by grace that we were saved through the sacrifice of Jesus. So what that means is we weren't practicing biblical marriage.

And so at the end of 5 years, we came that close to divorce. We literally did everything but go to an attorney and sign the papers. Well after we both got saved and we did in a fairly short period of time, and God did a miraculous work of healing our marriage, now came the hard part. I mean, we were healed, but we had no idea how a man and a woman were supposed to function within the context of God's design for marriage. No idea. I had no idea what my role as a man or a husband was. And Sue had no idea what her role as a wife ought to look like. And so we went through the process of learning that with all the bumps and bruises that go along with it. And you guys can relate, I'm sure.

So you go through life, your married years are learning to walk out the Word of God in all ways, but particularly in this area of marriage. And there is this thing that we all recognize in the heart of a woman, she wants to lead. And here's the problem, here's the problem. She's good at it. She's good at it. Like I told you, I married a very capable woman. I have a feeling sometimes that if I was gone, she would do just fine but that's not the role God gave her. It's the role God gave me who often feels insufficient, like many men do.

And so we have this situation here. We have this the woman who desires to rule over her husband, but understands ultimately if she walks with the Lord long enough, that idea is never going to give her any real satisfaction in the relationship. She will never be satisfied. In fact, it will come to harm her ultimately because a woman's shoulders we're not created by God to carry that burden, that role of leadership. And although many women are capable leaders and they can walk in that role for a period of time, it will ultimately harm them.

Now, you, on the other hand, have grace according to your calling, to be the leader of your home, and that responsibility is not going to hurt you, even though you might try to shirk or shrug it off from time to time. It won't hurt you because God's grace is upon you to play out, to walk out that role. It will hurt your wife.

I had to find that out the hard way because my wife was such a capable leader. After we'd been walking with Lord for a period of time, I was beginning to learn that God wanted me to step up and be the leader of my home, but I wasn't there yet. And she was so good at leading. I let her lead, I let her do a lot of things. And so it's not going to be ever satisfying to a woman. You've got to be the leader. That doesn't mean you do everything. I'm never going to be as good with finances as Sue is. Never, I couldn't balance a checkbook to save my soul, but I still have to be the leader.

I still have to say I'm in charge. And that's not a heavy handed sort of a thing. It's a thing that relieves her of that pressure that would otherwise be on her shoulders, which is ultimately going to hurt her, right?

So I believe that, that the idea that the apostle Paul is passing along here is that a woman is going to find her ultimate fulfillment in life by not seeking domination over her husband. That's never going to be a good thing ultimately for her, but rather she's going to find fulfillment in accepting and walking out God's design for her as a wife, as a mother, in all faith, love, holiness, and propriety. That that's where her satisfaction is going to come.

And in that sense, we're not talking about saved in verse 15 as an eternal salvation, but rather the woman is going to be delivered from that nagging inclination of dominance by simply walking out what God has ordained her to be in this world, in this life, and frankly in this marriage. And that is an interpretation based on context. Okay?

And so that's what I wanted to share with you. 1 Timothy chapter 2. Let's pray.

Father, I thank You for Your Word and I thank You, Lord, even for the passages that are rough, hard to understand because Lord, we have to dig in with both feet, both hands, and we've got to really get in and look and see what the Word says and what it doesn't say. And Lord, help us to do that. Help us to really press in.

And I pray my Father, God that as we've gone through these first 2 chapters of 1 Timothy and as we continue to study out this very important epistle that You would speak to all of your servants here today. And bring clarity and understanding and wisdom and insight that they can return to their homes and to their churches and to their marriages greatly equipped to walk out the wisdom and the guidance that is laid out for us in Your eternal Word for which we are very thankful that You have kept it for us all these years.

We thank You, we praise You, we worship You, King of kings and Lord of lords in the authority that is ours through the name of Your Son Jesus Christ, we pray, amen. Amen.