

Chapter 9

WHAT DOES IT MEAN NOT TO TEACH OR HAVE AUTHORITY OVER MEN?

1 Timothy 2:11-15

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The New Testament makes it plain that Christian women, like men, have been given spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:7-11). Women, like men, are to use these gifts to minister to the body of Christ (1 Peter 4:10); their ministries are indispensable to the life and growth of the church (1 Corinthians 12:12-26). There are many examples in the New Testament of just such ministries on the part of gifted Christian women (see Chapter 5 in this volume). To be true to the New Testament, then, the contemporary church needs to honor those varied ministries of women and to encourage women to pursue them.

But does the New Testament place any restrictions on the ministry of women? From the earliest days of the apostolic church, most orthodox Christians have thought so. One important reason they have thought so is the teaching of 1 Timothy 2:8-15:

8I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing. 9I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, 10but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God. 11A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. 12I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent. 13For Adam was formed first, then Eve. 14And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. 15But women will be kept safe through childbirth, if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.

Has the church been right to think that this passage imposes certain permanent restrictions on the ministry of women? Certainly this is what the passage, as translated above, seems to say. Women are not to teach or to have authority over men. They are not to do so because of the order in which God created man and woman and because of how man and woman fell into sin. However, many in our day think this passage does not require the contemporary church to limit the ministry of women. Others think it may limit only certain women from certain ministries in certain circumstances.

Many people refuse to apply this passage to the church today because they question whether it has authority over us. For example, non-evangelical New Testament scholars generally believe that all three pastoral epistles (1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus) were written by an unknown person in Paul's name long after he was dead. While this unknown author admired Paul and wanted to use his authority, he also contradicted Paul. In such cases, if anyone is to be able to speak to the church today with authority, it is the "true Paul," not the "pseudo-Paul" of the pastoral epistles. And the "true Paul" taught that in Christ there is neither male nor female (Galatians 3:28).

We are not, however, concerned here with those who hold this view, or others like it.¹ For such a viewpoint can only be refuted at a basic critical and theological level. We would want to show why Paul should be considered the author of the pastoral epistles; how the teaching of these epistles, although different in tone and emphasis from other letters of Paul, is nevertheless compatible with their teaching; and, most basically, why Christians should accept whatever Scripture says as holding unquestioned authority for the church today.

Yet there are many sincere Christians who agree with everything we have just said but still do not think that 1 Timothy 2:8-15 puts any general restriction on the ministry of women in the contemporary church. Are they right? Has the position of the Christian church on this issue for twenty centuries been the product of cultural conditioning from which we finally are able to free ourselves?

We do not think so. We think 1 Timothy 2:8-15 imposes two restrictions on the ministry of women: they are not to teach Christian doctrine to men and they are not to exercise authority directly over men in the church. These restrictions are permanent, authoritative for the church in all times and places and circumstances as long as men and women are descended from Adam and Eve. In this essay, we will attempt to justify these conclusions. In doing so, we will be concerned particularly to show why the arguments for alternative interpretations are not convincing.

The Setting

Paul writes this first letter to his disciple and coworker Timothy to remind him “how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household, which is the church of the living God” (1 Timothy 3:15). Paul must send this reminder because the church at Ephesus, where Timothy has been left to continue the work of ministry, is beset by false teaching (see 1:3). Certain people from within the church have departed from the true teaching of the gospel, have become quarrelsome and argumentative, and are propagating doctrines that are erroneous. Many interpretations of 1 Timothy 2:11-15 rely heavily on the nature of this false teaching at Ephesus in explaining what Paul means in these verses. There is nothing wrong with this in principle; good exegesis always takes into consideration the larger context in which a text appears. However, Paul tells us remarkably little about the specifics of this false teaching, presumably because he knows that Timothy is well acquainted with the problem. This means that we cannot be at all sure about the precise nature of this false teaching and, particularly, about its impact on the women in the church—witness the many, often contradictory, scholarly reconstructions of this false teaching.² But this means that we must be very careful about allowing any specific reconstruction—tentative and uncertain as it must be—to play too large a role in our exegesis.

We will, then, take a cautious approach to this matter. In our exegesis, we will use only those aspects of the false teaching that may be clearly inferred from the pastoral epistles and related New Testament passages to shed light on the text. Some of the aspects specifically relevant to 1 Timothy 2:11-15 are:

1. The false teachers sowed dissension and were preoccupied with trivialities (1 Timothy 1:4-6; 6:4-5; cf. 2 Timothy 2:14, 16-17, 23-24; Titus 1:10; 3:9-11).
2. The false teachers stressed asceticism as a means of spirituality. They taught abstinence from certain foods, from marriage, and probably sex generally (1 Timothy 4:1-3). In keeping with these ascetic tendencies, they may also have stressed physical training as a means of spirituality (4:8).
3. The false teachers had persuaded many women to follow them in their doctrines (1 Timothy 5:15; 2 Timothy 3:6-7).
4. The false teachers were encouraging women to discard what we might call traditional female roles in favor of a more egalitarian approach to the role relationships of men and women. This is not stated explicitly as a plank in the false teachers’ platform anywhere in the pastoral epistles. Nevertheless, it is an inference with a high degree of probability for the following reasons:

First, an encouragement to abstain from marriage, which we know was part of the false teachers’ program, is likely to include a more general denigration of traditional female roles. Second, the counsel in 1 Timothy 5:14 to young widows “to marry, to have children, to manage their homes”—i.e., to occupy themselves in traditional female roles—is

issued because some “have . . . turned away to follow Satan” (verse 15). Since Paul labels the false teaching as demonic (1 Timothy 4:1), it is likely that this turning away to follow Satan means following the false teachers and that they were teaching the opposite of what Paul commands in 5:14.

Third, the false teaching that is besetting the church at Ephesus sounds very similar to the general problem that seems to lurk behind 1 Corinthians. In both situations, the problem arose from within the church, involved the denial of a future, physical resurrection in favor of a present, “spiritual” resurrection (see 2 Timothy 2:18; 1 Corinthians 15, coupled with 4:8), and led to incorrect attitudes toward marriage and sex (1 Corinthians 7; 1 Timothy 4:3), toward food (1 Corinthians 8:1-13; 1 Timothy 4:3, although the specific issues are a bit different), and, most importantly, to a tendency on the part of the women to disregard their appropriate roles, especially vis-a-vis their husbands (see 1 Corinthians 11:2-18; 14:33b-36; 1 Timothy 2:9-15; 5:13-14; Titus 2:3-5).

While we cannot be sure about this, there is good reason to think that the problem in both situations was rooted in a false belief that Christians were already in the full form of God’s kingdom and that they had accordingly been spiritually taken “out of” the world so that aspects of this creation, like sex, food, and male/female distinctions, were no longer relevant to them.³ It may well be that these beliefs arose from an unbalanced emphasis on Paul’s own teaching that Christians were “raised with Christ” (Ephesians 2:6; Colossians 2:12; 3:1) and that in Christ there is neither “male nor female” (Galatians 3:28). What Paul would be doing in both 1 Corinthians and the pastoral epistles is seeking to right the balance by reasserting the importance of the created order and the ongoing significance of those role distinctions between men and women that he saw rooted in creation. Whether this specific interpretation of the data of 1 Corinthians and the pastorals is correct or not, the similarity between the battery of problems in the two situations strongly suggests that in Ephesus, as in Corinth, a tendency to remove role distinctions between men and women was part of the false teaching.⁴ Very likely, then, Paul’s teaching about the roles of men and women in church ministry in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 is occasioned by the need to counter the false teachers on this point.

Appropriate Behavior for Christian Women-Verses 5-11

In order to understand 1 Timothy 2:11-15, we need to back up and begin with verse 8, where Paul requests that “men everywhere . . . lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing.” The word everywhere would be translated better “in every place” (en panti topo^o). Paul is probably referring to the various “places” (house-churches) in which Christians at Ephesus met for worship. With the word likewise (ho^o sauto^os, verse 9), Paul connects this verse with his admonitions regarding the deportment of Christian women. This may suggest that Paul wants the reader to carry over from verse 8 both the verb want (boulomai) and the verb pray; hence: “Likewise, [I want] women [to pray], in modest dress. . . .” But it is more likely that we should carry over only the verb want, making verse 9 an independent exhortation directed to women: “Likewise, I want women to dress modestly . . .” (see the niv). This reading is to be preferred both because of syntax—since both pray (verse 8) and adorn (verse 9) are infinitives, it is natural to think they both depend on the verb want—and context—at the end of verse 8 Paul’s focus has shifted to appropriate behavior (“without anger or disputing”), and he does not come back to the topic of prayer.

This caution about anger and quarreling during prayer is almost surely occasioned by the impact of the false teaching on the church, for one of the most obvious results of that false teaching was divisiveness and discord (see 1 Timothy 6:4-5). The exhortation of verses 9-10, in which Paul encourages Christian women to “dress modestly, with decency and propriety,” with “good deeds” rather than with elaborate hair styles and ostentatious clothes, might also be directed against the impact of the false teaching in Ephesus. For ostentatious dress, in the ancient world, sometimes could signal a woman’s loose morals

and independence from her husband. These connections are clear in a passage from the intertestamental Jewish book,⁵ *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, Reuben 5: “Women are evil, my children, and by reason of their lacking authority or power over man, they scheme treacherously how they might entice him to themselves by means of their looks. . . . They contrive in their hearts against men, then by decking themselves out they lead men’s minds astray. . . . Accordingly, my children, flee from sexual promiscuity, and order your wives and your daughters not to adorn their heads and their appearances so as to deceive men’s sound minds.”⁶ The problem addressed in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 is of the same general nature, in which the Christian women were adopting a style of dress (or hairstyle) that implicitly proclaimed their independence from their husbands. And, as we have seen, the situation at Ephesus is very similar to that at Corinth some years earlier.

Having reminded Timothy that Christian women are to adorn themselves with “good deeds,” Paul now warns them about certain activities that do not fall into this category. In verse 11, he commands them to “learn in quietness and full submission.” That Paul wants Christian women to learn is an important point, for such a practice was not generally encouraged by the Jews. But this does not mean that Paul’s desire for women to learn is the main point being made here. For it is not the fact that they are to learn, but the manner in which they are to learn that concerns Paul: “in quietness” and “with full submission.” The situation may be compared to my saying to my wife: “Please have the children watch TV quietly and without fighting.” My wife or I might or might not already have given permission for the children to watch television, but in this sentence, the stress falls not on the command to watch it, but on the manner in which it is to be done.

How, then, were the women to learn? First, Paul says, “in quietness.” The word Paul uses (*he-suchia*) can mean “silence,” in an absolute sense, or “quietness,” in the sense of “peacableness” (a cognate word, *he-suchion*, is used in 1 Timothy 2:2: “. . . that we may live peaceful and quiet lives . . .”).⁷ Although the point is much the same in either case, there is good reason to think that the word should be translated “silence” in this context, since its opposite is “teaching.” Clearly, Paul is concerned that the women accept the teaching of the church “peaceably”-without criticism and without dispute. Certainly, as Aida Besancon Spencer argues, Paul is encouraging the women at Ephesus to be “wise learners.”⁸ But the encouragement does not come in a vacuum-almost certainly it is necessary because at least some women were not learning “in quietness.” These women had probably picked up the disputatious habits of the false teachers, and Paul must therefore warn them to accept without criticism the teaching of the properly appointed church leaders. But there is probably more to the problem than this. There is good reason to think that the underlying issue in verse 11 is not just submission to the teaching of the church but the submission of women to their husbands and, perhaps, to the male leadership of the church. This is suggested by Paul’s use of the word submission (*hypotage*). Submission is the appropriate response of Christians to those who are in authority over them (e.g., to government [Titus 3:1] and, for those who were slaves, to masters [Titus 2:9; the intention of Ephesians 5:21 is debated-see Chapter 8 of this volume]). The word (or its related verb) is a consistent feature in passages dealing with the appropriate response of wives to husbands (see Ephesians 5:24; Colossians 3:18; Titus 2:5; 1 Peter 3:1, 5; perhaps 1 Corinthians 14:34). The facts that this verse is directed only to women and that verses 12-14 (and perhaps also 9-10) focus on the relationship of men to women incline us to think that the submission in view here is also this submission of women to male leadership. (Reasons for thinking that this submission in this context is not just to husbands but to male leaders in the church generally are given below.) In light of our suggestions about the nature of the false teaching at Ephesus, we may surmise that women at Ephesus were expressing their “liberation” from their husbands, or from other men in the church, by criticizing and speaking out against male leaders. (The basic issue may, then, be roughly the same as in 1 Corinthians 14:33b-36.) This tendency Paul

encourages Timothy to counter by enforcing the principle of submission of the women to the appropriate male leadership.

Spencer further argues that the very fact that women were to learn implies that they should eventually teach, since many ancient texts emphasize that the purpose of learning is to prepare one to teach.⁹ But two replies may be made to this reasoning. First, we can grant the point without damage to our interpretation of the text, since we think Paul is only prohibiting women from teaching men. For women to be prepared to teach other women (see Titus 2:3-4), they would naturally need to learn and learn well. But, second, can we really conclude that learning must lead to teaching? Certainly if we mean by teaching an officially recognized activity of expositing and applying a section of Scripture, this is not the case. Neither do the texts cited by Spencer prove this. All Jewish men were encouraged to study the law; did they all become rabbis? Similarly, all Christians are encouraged to study the Scriptures; but Paul expressly limits “teaching” to a restricted number who have the gift of teaching (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:28-30). Of course, if we define teach in a broader sense—the communication of Christian truth through private conversation, family devotions, etc.—we may conclude that all Christians do indeed “teach.”

But this is not the kind of teaching Paul is talking about in this context. Neither does it seem to be what Spencer means, for her point is that this verse validates women as teachers even in positions of authority in the church. It is manifest, then, that the encouragement to women to learn gives no reason to think that they were also to be engaged in expositing and applying Biblical truth to men.

Prohibitions on the Ministry of Women—Verse 12

The phrase full submission is the hinge between the command in verse 11—“A woman should learn in quietness and full submission”—and the prohibitions in verse 12—“I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man.” The word that connects these verses is a particle (*de*) that usually has a mild adversative (“but”) force. But, as so often with this word, its mild adversative force arises from the transition from one point to another rather than from a contrast in content.¹⁰ In this case, the transition is from one activity that women are to carry out in submission (learning) to two others that are prohibited in order to maintain their submission (teaching and having authority). We may, therefore, paraphrase the transition in this way: “Let the women learn . . . with full submission; but [*de*] ‘full submission’ means also that I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man.”

Verse 12 is the focus of discussion in this passage, for it is here that Paul prohibits the women at Ephesus from engaging in certain ministries with reference to men. There are six distinguishable issues that must be decided at the exegetical level: (1) the significance of the verb permit (*epitrepo*), which is in the present tense; (2) the meaning of teach (*didaskhein*); (3) whether the word man (*andros*) is the object of the verb teach; (4) the meaning of the verb translated in the niv “to have authority” (*authenthein*); (5) the syntactical and logical relationship between the two words teach and have authority (they are connected by *oude*, “neither”); and (6) whether the Greek words *gyne* and *aner* mean, respectively, “woman” and “man” or “wife” and “husband.”

A. The Word Permit

Paul’s use of the word permit—instead of, for instance, an imperative—and his putting it in the present tense are often taken as indications that Paul views the injunction that follows as limited and temporary.¹¹ The fact is, however, that nothing definite can be concluded from this word. No doubt Paul viewed his own teaching as authoritative for the churches to whom he wrote. Paul’s “advice” to Timothy is the word of an apostle, accredited by God, and included in the inspired Scriptures. As far as the present tense of the verb goes, this allows us to conclude only that Paul was at the time of writing

insisting on these prohibitions. Whether he means these prohibitions to be in force only at the time of writing, because of a specific situation, or—as in Romans 12:1: “I urge [present tense] you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices . . .” —to be applied to any church at any time cannot be known from the verb permit, but must be decided by the context in which it occurs.¹² It certainly is not correct to say that the present tense in and of itself shows that the command is temporary; it does not.

B. The Meaning of Teach

In prohibiting women from teaching, what exactly is Paul prohibiting? And is he restricting them from all teaching or only from teaching men? The word teach and its cognate nouns teaching (*didaskalia*) and teacher (*didaskalos*) are used in the New Testament mainly to denote the careful transmission of the tradition concerning Jesus Christ and the authoritative proclamation of God’s will to believers in light of that tradition (see especially 1 Timothy 4:11: “Command and teach these things;” 2 Timothy 2:2; Acts 2:42; Romans 12:7). While the word can be used more broadly to describe the general ministry of edification that takes place in various ways (e.g., through teaching, singing, praying, reading Scripture [Colossians 3:16]), the activity usually designated by teach is plainly restricted to certain individuals who have the gift of teaching (see 1 Corinthians 12:28-30; Ephesians 4:11). This makes it clear that not all Christians engaged in teaching.¹³ In the pastoral epistles, teaching always has this restricted sense of authoritative doctrinal instruction. As Paul’s own life draws to a close, and in response to the false teaching, Paul is deeply concerned to insure that sound, healthful teaching be maintained in the churches. One of Timothy’s main tasks is to teach (1 Timothy 4:11-16; 2 Timothy 4:2) and to prepare others to carry on this vital ministry (2 Timothy 2:2). While perhaps not restricted to the elder-overseer, “teaching” in this sense was an important activity of these people (see 1 Timothy 3:2; 5:17; Titus 1:9).

At this point the question of application cannot be evaded. What functions in the modern church would be considered teaching in this sense? Some have suggested that we have no modern parallel to it since, as the argument goes, the New Testament canon replaces the first-century teacher as the locus of authority.¹⁴ However, it does seem right to claim that we have teaching that is substantially the same as what Paul had in mind here as he advised the first-century church. The addition of an authoritative, written norm is unlikely to have significantly altered the nature of Christian teaching. Certainly the Jewish activity of teaching that probably serves as a model for the early Christian teaching was all along much dependent on the transmission and application of a body of truth, the Old Testament Scriptures, and the developing Jewish tradition.¹⁵ Before the New Testament Scriptures, early Christian teachers also had authoritative Christian traditions on which to base their ministries, and the implication of passages such as 2 Timothy 2:2 is that teaching, in the sense depicted in the New Testament, would continue to be very important for the church. Moreover, the Scriptures should be regarded as replacing the apostles, who wrote Scripture, not the teachers who expounded and applied it. Certainly, any authority that the teacher has is derived, inherent in the Christian truth being proclaimed rather than in the person of the teacher. But the activity of teaching, precisely because it does come to God’s people with the authority of God and His Word, is authoritative.

In light of these considerations, we argue that the teaching prohibited to women here includes what we would call preaching (note 2 Timothy 4:2: “Preach the word . . . with careful instruction” [teaching, *didache*]), and the teaching of Bible and doctrine in the church, in colleges, and in seminaries. Other activities—leading Bible studies, for instance—may be included, depending on how they are done. Still others—evangelistic witnessing, counseling, teaching subjects other than Bible or doctrine—are not, in our opinion, teaching in the sense Paul intends here.

C. Is Every Kind of Teaching Prohibited, Or Only Teaching of Men?

Is Paul prohibiting women from all teaching? We do not think so. The word man (andros), which is plainly the object of the verb have authority (authentain), should be construed as the object of the verb teach also. This construction is grammatically unobjectionable,¹⁶ and it alone suits the context, in which Paul bases the prohibitions of verse 12 on the created differences between men and women (verse 13). Indeed, as we have argued, this male/female differentiation pervades this passage and comes to direct expression in the word that immediately precedes verse 12, submission. Paul's position in the pastoral epistles is, then, consistent: he allows women to teach other women (Titus 2:3-4),¹⁷ but prohibits them to teach men.

D. The Meaning of Have Authority

The verb translated in the niv "have authority" (authentain) has generated a great deal of discussion. We will confine ourselves to three points that we think are most important. First, the frequent appeal to etymology—the roots that make up the word—in explaining this word is understandable, given the limited number of relevant occurrences, but must always remain a precarious basis for conclusions. Not only is the etymology of the word debated, but also the usage of words often departs, in unpredictable ways, from their etymological meaning (e.g., the word butterfly). Second, the occurrences of this word—the verb—that are closest in time and nature to 1 Timothy mean "have authority over" or "dominate" (in the neutral sense of "have dominion over," not in the negative sense "lord it over").¹⁸ Third, the objection that, had Paul wanted to say "exercise authority," he would have used the word *exousiazo*¹⁹ does not bear up under scrutiny. Paul's three other uses of that verb hardly put it in the category of his standard vocabulary, and the vocabulary of the pastoral epistles is well known to be distinct from Paul's vocabulary elsewhere. For these reasons, we think the translation "have authority over" is the best English rendering of this word.

Again, we must ask the question of application. What kind of modern church practice would Paul be prohibiting to women in saying they are not to have authority over a man? First, we must, of course, recognize that it is not a question of a woman (in the New Testament or in our day) exercising ultimate authority over a man; God and the Scriptures stand over any Christian in a way no minister or human authority ever could. But, within these spheres of authority, we may nevertheless speak legitimately of a governing or ruling function exercised under God by some Christians over others (see 1 Thessalonians 5:12; Hebrews 13:17). In the pastoral epistles, this governing activity is ascribed to the elders (see 1 Timothy 3:5; 5:17). Clearly, then, Paul's prohibition of women's having authority over a man would exclude a woman from becoming an elder in the way this office is described in the pastoral epistles. By extension, then, women would be debarred from occupying whatever position in a given local church would be equivalent to the pastoral epistles' governing elder (many churches, for instance, call these people deacons). This would be the case even if a woman's husband were to give her permission to occupy such a position, for Paul's concern is not with a woman's acting independently of her husband or usurping his authority but with the woman's exercising authority in the church over any man.

On the other hand, we do not think Paul's prohibition should restrict women from voting, with other men and women, in a congregational meeting, for, while the congregation as a whole can be said to be the final authority, this is not the same thing as the exercise of authority ascribed, e.g., to the elders. Nor do we think Paul would intend to prohibit women from most church administrative activities. But what about women teaching or having authority over men in other activities in society generally (for example, in government, business, or education)? While this broader issue is addressed in another essay in this volume (see pages 50-52, 88-89, and 388-393), it is appropriate to note here that Paul's concern in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 is specifically the role of men and

women in activities within the Christian community, and we question whether the prohibitions in this text can rightly be applied outside that framework.

E. Are Teaching and Having Authority Two Activities or One?

Thus far we have spoken of Paul's prohibiting women from two specific activities: "teaching" men and "having authority over" men. It has been argued, however, that the two verbs should be taken together, in a grammatical relationship called hendiadys, such that only one activity is prohibited: teaching in an authoritative (authentein) way.²⁰ If the meaning of authentein is "exercise authority," this interpretation would not materially change the first prohibition identified above—for the teaching Paul has in mind here has, as we have argued, some authority in itself—but it would eliminate entirely the second prohibition (against having authority over a man). We do not, however, think this interpretation is likely. While the word in question, oude ("and not," "neither," "nor"), certainly usually joins "two closely related items,"²¹ it does not usually join together words that restate the same thing or that are mutually interpreting, and sometimes it joins opposites (e.g., Gentile and Jew, slave and free; Galatians 3:28).²² Although teaching in Paul's sense here is authoritative in and of itself, not all exercising of authority in the church is through teaching, and Paul treats the two tasks as distinct elsewhere in 1 Timothy when discussing the work of elders in the church (3:2, 4-5; 5:17). That teaching and having authority are "closely related" is, of course, true, as it is true that both ministries often are carried out by the same individuals, but here and elsewhere they are nonetheless distinct, and in 1 Timothy 2:12, Paul prohibits women from conducting either activity, whether jointly or in isolation, in relation to men.

F. Are Only Husbands and Wives in View?

The final item on our list of exegetically significant issues in verse 12 is the relationship intended by the words *gyne* and *aner*. The difficulty arises from the fact that these words are used to describe both the marital relationship (wife/husband) and the larger gender relationship (woman/man). If, as many think,²³ Paul is here using the words in the former sense, then what he is prohibiting is not the teaching or exercising of authority of women in general over men in general, but only of wives over their own husbands. However, the wording and the context both favor the broader reference. If Paul had wanted to confine his prohibition in verse 12 to wives in relationship to their husbands, we would have expected him to use a definite article or possessive pronoun with man: "I am not permitting a woman to teach or to exercise authority over her man." (Paul readily made a similar distinction elsewhere in writing of male/female relationships. Women, he said, are to submit to "their own [idiois] husbands" [Ephesians 5:22, *nash*; cf. Colossians 3:18.] And the context (verses 8-9) clearly addresses men and women generally as members of the church, not (as in Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 3:18-19) as husbands and wives, as members of family units; it is not only husbands who are to lift holy hands in prayer, but all the men, and not only wives who are to dress modestly, but all the women (verses 9-10). Therefore, the prohibitions of verse 12 are applicable to all women in the church in their relationships with all men in the church.

The Basis of the Instruction: Creation and the Fall—Verses 13-14

In verse 12 Paul prohibits women in the church at Ephesus from teaching men and having authority over them. But we now face the crucial question: Does this prohibition apply to the Christian church today?

We cannot simply assume that it does. The New Testament contains many injunctions that are intended only for a specific situation, and when the situation changes, the injunction may change its form or lose its validity. For instance, most Christians agree that we are no longer required to "Greet one another with a holy kiss" (1 Corinthians 16:20); forms of greeting have changed, and in our day, to obey this injunction, we may, as J. B. Phillips puts it, "shake hands all round as a sign of Christian love."

On the other hand, it is not a matter simply of identifying a local or temporary circumstance to which a text is directed and concluding that the text is therefore limited in its application. Almost the entire New Testament is written to specific circumstances—correcting certain false teachings, answering specific questions, seeking to unify specific church factions, etc.—but this does not necessarily mean that what is written applies only to those circumstances. For instance, Paul develops his doctrine of justification by faith in Galatians in response to specific, Judaizing teachers for a specific group of first-century Christians. But the specific nature of these circumstances in no way limits the applicability of his teaching. We might say that the circumstances give rise to his teaching but do not limit it. This point is particularly important, because some studies of 1 Timothy 2:12 imply that if one can identify local or temporary circumstances against which the passage is written then one can conclude that the text has only limited application. This is manifestly not true. Therefore, the question to be asked of 1 Timothy 2:12 is, Can we identify circumstances that limit its application to certain times and places?

Many think so, and the suggestions about local circumstances that have been proposed are legion. Lacking space to deal with all of them, we will focus on the two that are both the most popular in recent literature and that we think have the best claim to be accepted: that Paul is addressing only women who have succumbed to the false teaching at Ephesus, and that he is requiring only conformity to existing cultural conceptions of the woman's role.

The first suggestion emphasizes that 1 Timothy is directed throughout to the false teaching at Ephesus and that 1 Timothy 2:9-15 must, therefore be interpreted against this background. While we think the claim that “the whole of 1 Timothy . . . is dominated by this singular concern [that is, the false teaching]”²⁴ is exaggerated, we may grant the point without being any further along on the issue at hand. In fact, it is likely that the false teaching does give rise to Paul's instruction in 2:9-15;²⁵ but the crucial question is, How does it affect his instructions? As we have suggested above, we think Paul is correcting the erroneous views of the place of women vis-a-vis men taught by the false teachers (although our conclusions do not depend on this) and that verse 12 restates Paul's customary position on this issue in response to the false teaching. In other words, it was Paul's position in every church that women should not teach or have authority over men. He must give explicit teaching on the subject here simply because it has surfaced as a problem in this church. Yet this would be his position in any church, whether or not some false teaching required him to write about it. We think this reading of the situation is well-grounded in the actual evidence of 1 Timothy and that any other reading must import ideas that are not plainly present.

But the advocates of the view we are now examining go further, insisting that verse 12 is directed only against women who had fallen prey to the false teaching. Paul's purpose, then, is not to debar all women at all times from teaching or “domineering over” men, but to prohibit women who have succumbed to false teaching from teaching and propagating these doctrines. In our day, we obey Paul's injunction by preventing women who are ill-trained and under the influence of false teaching from teaching such doctrine.²⁶

What are the reasons for accepting this specific interpretation of the situation Paul addresses? The advocates of this view, which has become by far the most popular approach among those who do not think that 1 Timothy 2:12 has general application, point particularly to verse 14. Here, they argue, Paul cites Eve as typical of what the women at Ephesus were doing: teaching false doctrine and doing so without adequate preparation. Eve taught the man to eat of the tree, bringing the ruin of falling into transgression; the women at Ephesus must not repeat her mistake by propagating false teaching and bringing ruin to the church.

But this argument falls completely short of being convincing. Paul's reference to Eve in verse 14 is difficult, but there are two emphases in the verse that must be factored into any adequate interpretation: the focus on the relationship between man and woman ("Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman . . .") and the focus on deception. This latter point suggests that Eve stands not as a "type" of Ephesian women who were teaching false doctrine, but as a type of Ephesian women who were being deceived by false doctrine-hence the need to warn them about learning "in quietness and full submission" (verse 11). Paul says nothing here about Eve's teaching of Adam, which, had this been his point, he could easily have done. Moreover, there is no evidence in the pastoral epistles that the women were teaching these false doctrines.²⁷ If the issue, then, is deception, it may be that Paul wants to imply that all women are, like Eve, more susceptible to being deceived than are men, and that this is why they should not be teaching men! While this interpretation is not impossible, we think it unlikely. For one thing, there is nothing in the Genesis accounts or in Scripture elsewhere to suggest that Eve's deception is representative of women in general. But second, and more important, this interpretation does not mesh with the context. Paul, as we have seen, is concerned to prohibit women from teaching men; the focus is on the role relationship of men and women. But a statement about the nature of women per se would move the discussion away from this central issue, and it would have a serious and strange implication. After all, does Paul care only that the women not teach men false doctrines? Does he not care that they not teach them to other women? More likely, then, verse 14, in conjunction with verse 13, is intended to remind the women at Ephesus that Eve was deceived by the serpent in the Garden (Genesis 3:13) precisely in taking the initiative over the man whom God had given to be with her and to care for her. In the same way, if the women at the church at Ephesus proclaim their independence from the men of the church, refusing to learn "in quietness and full submission" (verse 11), seeking roles that have been given to men in the church (verse 12), they will make the same mistake Eve made and bring similar disaster on themselves and the church.²⁸ This explanation of the function of verse 14 in the paragraph fits what we know to be the general insubordination of some of the women at Ephesus and explains Paul's emphasis in the verse better than any other alternative.

There is a more serious problem with the viewpoint according to which verse 12 may be applied only to women who are seeking to teach falsely: verse 13. It is telling that most of the advocates of this general approach pass over verse 13 very quickly, explaining it as simply an "introduction" to verse 14,²⁹ or ignoring it entirely. Yet this verse provides the first reason ("for" [gar]³⁰) for the prohibitions in verse 12. Paul emphasizes that man was created "first, then" Eve; the temporal sequence is strongly marked (protos, "first," and eita, "then"). What is the point of this statement? Both the logic of this passage and the parallel in 1 Corinthians 11:3-10 make this clear: for Paul, the man's priority in the order of creation is indicative of the headship that man is to have over woman. The woman's being created after man, as his helper, shows the position of submission that God intended as inherent in the woman's relation to the man, a submission that is violated if a woman teaches doctrine or exercises authority over a man. Some accuse Paul, or the "unknown author" of the pastorals, of using the Genesis accounts of creation unfairly for these purposes.³¹ But Paul's interpretation can be shown to be a fair extrapolation from Genesis 2 (see Chapter 3 of this volume).³² This is an extremely important indicator of how Paul understood the prohibitions in verse 12. For by rooting these prohibitions in the circumstances of creation rather than in the circumstances of the fall, Paul shows that he does not consider these restrictions to be the product of the curse and presumably, therefore, to be phased out by redemption.³³ And by citing creation rather than a local situation or cultural circumstance as his basis for the prohibitions, Paul makes it clear that, while these local or cultural issues may have provided the context of the issue, they do not provide the reason for his advice. His

reason for the prohibitions of verse 12 is the created role relationship of man and woman, and we may justly conclude that these prohibitions are applicable as long as this reason remains true.

It is sometimes said in opposition to this line of reasoning that even an appeal to creation does not demand that the prohibition involved be permanent.³⁴ This may be granted, in the sense that New Testament authors will sometimes appeal to creation, or to the Old Testament generally, to establish a principle on which a specific form of behavior is demanded. In these cases, while the principle always remains in effect, the specific form of behavior will not. This seems to be the situation, for instance, in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16, where the appeal to creation grounds the headship of man, a theological principle, which is in turn applied to the specific issue of women's head coverings.³⁵ But the difference between this and 1 Timothy 2:12-13 is simply this: in 1 Timothy 2:12-18, the principle cannot be separated from the form of behavior. In other words, for a woman to teach a man or to have authority over a man is, by definition, to void the principle for which Paul quotes the creation account. Granted this and granted the complete absence of explicit temporal or cultural references in the whole paragraph, the prohibitions of verse 12 can be ignored only by dismissing the theological principle itself.

This last point also calls into question the other main attempt to confine the teaching of verse 12 to a local or limited situation. On this view, Paul wants the women to refrain from teaching or exercising authority over men because such activities would have been considered offensive to the great majority of people in Ephesus.³⁶ Now, the concern about Christians avoiding behavior that would bring the gospel into ill repute is mentioned in the pastoral epistles (see 1 Timothy 6:1; Titus 2:5), and, as we have seen, the false teachers were propagating an anti-traditional view of the role of women. But, in reacting against such false teaching in 2:9-18, we must ask a crucial question: does Paul restrict women's activities only because such activities would be offensive in that culture? Certainly it is clear that Paul requires many forms of behavior in the pastoral epistles that are both in keeping with the culture of the day and are part of God's eternal will for His people. That the behavior required in 1 Timothy 2:11-12 falls into this category is clear from (1) the lack of any reference in this context to a concern for cultural accommodation, and (2) the appeal to the order of creation—a manifestly transcultural consideration—as the explicit basis for the behavior.

A further variant of this last interpretation holds that Paul does require submission of women to men as a permanent fixture of Christian life and that the Old Testament references in verses 12-14 ground this general demand only. The principle of submission would have been violated in the first century if women had taught men or exercised authority over them, but it would not be in our day because of our different conceptions of what constitutes submission.³⁷ However, not only is the requirement of submission a little further away (verse 11) than we might expect if verses 13-14 give the basis for it, but we must question whether changing conceptions of men's and women's roles affect the nature of the activities Paul prohibits here. However a society might view these matters, the person who teaches in the sense Paul has in mind here and, obviously, the person who exercises authority over someone else is by definition in a position of authority with respect to that other person. For any woman in any culture to engage in these activities with respect to men means that she is violating the Biblical principle of submission.

Women's Role in a Positive Light—Verse 15

Before concluding, we must say something about the notoriously difficult verse 15. While we do not think that the interpretation of this verse is decisive for the meaning of the verses that precede it, the verse does conclude the paragraph and may shed some light on the whole.

One view of verse 15 holds that Paul is promising that women will be kept physically safe during childbirth, and this interpretation appears to be reflected in the niv rendering: “women will be kept safe through childbirth. . . .” However, this is an unusual meaning for *save* (*sōzō*), which elsewhere always refers to salvation, in the theological sense, in Paul, and does not fit well with the qualifications that follow: “if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.” A second interpretation links this verse closely with the material about Eve that immediately precedes. Just as the curse that came upon Eve is mentioned in verse 14, so verse 15 alludes to the salvation that Eve (and other women) experience “through the childbirth,” that is, the birth of the “seed” promised to the woman in Genesis 3.³⁸ This interpretation does more justice to Paul’s language and to the context, but we must question whether a reference to the birth of Christ is naturally denoted by the word *childbirth*, or bearing of children (*teknogonia*), even when it is preceded by the article. The verbal form of this word (infinitive) is used in 1 Timothy 5:14 (albeit without the article) to denote bearing or raising children generally, and this is the meaning we would expect it to have in 2:15 also.

Another interpretation of verse 15 that depends on the reference to Eve in verse 14 is that the “bearing of children” is the trial, or hindrance through (*dia*) which women will experience salvation.³⁹ However, we must question whether childbearing can be considered a hindrance to the salvation of women. We think it is preferable to view verse 15 as designating the circumstances⁴⁰ in which Christian women will experience (work out; cf. Philippians 2:12) their salvation-in maintaining as priorities those key roles that Paul, in keeping with Scripture elsewhere, highlights: being faithful, helpful wives, raising children to love and reverence God, managing the household (cf. 1 Timothy 5:14; Titus 2:3-5).⁴¹ This is not to say, of course, that women cannot be saved unless they bear children. The women with whom Paul is concerned in this paragraph are all almost certainly married, so that he can mention one central role-bearing and raising children-as a way of designating appropriate female roles generally. Probably Paul makes this point because the false teachers were claiming that women could really experience what God had for them only if they abandoned the home and became actively involved in teaching and leadership roles in the church. If this interpretation is correct, then verse 15 fits perfectly with the emphasis we have seen in this text throughout. Against the attempt of the false teachers to get the women in Ephesus to adopt “libertarian,” unbiblical attitudes and behavior, Paul reaffirms the Biblical model of the Christian woman adorned with good works rather than with outward, seductive trappings, learning quietly and submissively, refraining from taking positions of authority over men, giving attention to those roles to which God has especially called women.

Conclusion

We want to make a final, very important point about all attempts to limit the application of 1 Timothy 2:12. The interpreter of Scripture may validly question whether any given command or teaching is to be applied beyond the situation for which it was first given. But the criteria used to answer that question must be carefully formulated. It is surely not enough simply to suggest local or cultural factors that may restrict the application of a text, for with such a methodology any teaching in Scripture could be dismissed. In the case of 1 Timothy 2:12, none of the factors that we have considered above, nor any of the many others that have been proposed (women were not educated enough to teach; Jews would have been offended by it; etc.) is stated, or even hinted at, in the text. Is it not a dangerous procedure to import such factors without clear warrant in the text? To be sure, there are commands of Scripture that we do not consider applicable today without any explicit restriction in the context; 1 Corinthians 16:20 (“greet one another with a holy kiss”), cited earlier, is an example. And we obey Titus 2:9-10 today in principle rather than literally. But the difference between such texts and 1 Timothy 2:12 is twofold. The activities involved in 1 Timothy 2:12 are, by definition, transcultural in the sense that they are permanent ministries of the Christian church, and the

prohibitions of 1 Timothy 2:12 are grounded in theology. When we add to these factors the fact that the New Testament teaching on these matters is consistent (see other essays in this volume), we are justified in requiring very good reasons from the text itself to limit the application of this text in any way. We find no such reasons. Therefore, we must conclude that the restrictions imposed by Paul in 1 Timothy 2:12 are valid for Christians in all places and all times.

Endnotes to Chapter Nine

1. Some recent representative examples of this viewpoint are Mary Hayter, *The New Eve in Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), pp. 132-133, 142-143; Francis X. Cleary, "Women in the New Testament: St. Paul and the Early Pauline Churches," *Biblical Theological Bulletin* 10 (1980): 78-82. The extreme to which this can be taken is illustrated by William O. Walker, who thinks all the New Testament female subordination texts are post-Pauline, passages like 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 being insertions into the text of Paul's own letter. "The 'Theology of Woman's Place' and the 'Paulinist' Tradition," *Se-meia* 28 (1988): 101-112.

2. See the surveys in Donald Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1957), pp. 32-38, and J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (London: Black, 1963), pp. 10-18. Kelly notes that the picture of the false teaching is "incomplete and tantalizingly vague" (p. 11).

3. On the situation in 1 Corinthians, see especially Anthony C. Thiselton, "Realized Eschatology at Corinth," *New Testament Studies* 24 (1977): 510-528. P. H. Towner makes a clear and convincing case for the general similarity between the problems behind 1 Corinthians and the pastoral epistles: "Gnosis and Realized Eschatology in Ephesus (of the Pastoral Epistles) and the Corinthian Enthusiasm," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 31 (1987): 95-124. The paragraph above is heavily indebted to Towner's work.

4. See also David M. Scholer, "1 Timothy 2:9-15 and the Place of Women in the Church's Ministry," *Women, Authority and the Bible*, ed. Alvera Mickelsen (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1985), p. 198.

5. While some think this book is a Christian production, we think it is a pre-Christian Jewish work with minor Christian interpolations. See the comments of H. C. Kee in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, two vols., ed. J. H. Charlesworth (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983, 1985), 1:775-780 (the translation in the text is also from this volume).

6. For examples from ancient writers, see David Balch, *Let Wives be Submissive: The Domestic Code in 1 Peter* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1981), pp. 101-102. On 1 Timothy 2:9-10, see Scholer, "1 Timothy 2:9-15," p. 201; Samuele Bacchiocchi, *Women in the Church: A Biblical Study on the Role of Women in the Church* (Biblical Perspectives 7; Berrien Springs, MI: Biblical Perspectives, 1987), p. 149.

7. The meaning of this word is thoroughly discussed in the interchange between Moo and Philip Payne; Moo, "1 Timothy 2:11-15," p. 64; Payne, "Libertarian Women at Ephesus: A Response to Douglas J. Moo's Article '1 Timothy 2:11-15: Meaning and Significance,'" *Trinity Journal* (1981): 169-170; Moo, "The Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:11-15: A Rejoinder," *Trinity Journal* 2 (1981): 198-199; Payne, "The Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:11-15: A Surrejoinder" (unpublished paper that is included in "What Does the Scripture Teach About the Ordination of Women?" produced by the Committee on Ministerial Standing of the Evangelical Free Church of America), pp. 99-100. (This series of articles will be referred to hereafter simply by the names of the authors, in the order above.)

8. Aida Besançon Spencer, *Beyond the Curse: Women called to Ministry* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1985), pp. 75-79.

9. Spencer, *Beyond the Curse*, pp. 74-80.

10. Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 2nd ed., trans. William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, rev. F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 171, describes the word as follows: “one of the most commonly used Gk. particles, used to connect one clause with another when it is felt that there is some contrast between them, though the contrast is often scarcely discernible. Most common translations: but, when a contrast is clearly implied; and, when a simple connective is desired, without contrast: frequently it cannot be translated at all.” The niv rendering of the particle in 1 Timothy bears out this description: *de* is translated “but” eight times; “now,” “rather,” “as for,” and “and” once each; and not at all sixteen times. The nature of this word, then, renders extremely precarious any exegetical decisions based on its exact meaning. Yet Spencer (p. 85) and Payne (“Surrejoinder,” p. 97) claim that Paul’s use of *de* here “indicates a consciousness of the contrast between the command to learn and the present prohibition of teaching.” Nevertheless, even if we grant that *de* here is adversative—which, in light of what we said above, is hardly something we can be very sure of—this particular interpretation of that contrast has no basis in the text, as Mary J. Evans, who is sympathetic to the viewpoint of Spencer and Payne, recognizes. Evans, *Woman in the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1983), p. 103. Lacking such evidence, the simpler and more obvious mildly adversative transitional force suggested in this chapter should be adopted.

11. This argument is widespread. See, for instance, Don Williams, *The Apostle Paul and Women in the Church* (Van Nuys, CA: BIM, 1977), p. 112.

12. For further discussion of this point, see Moo, p. 65; Payne, pp. 170-173; Moo, pp. 199-200; Payne, pp. 100-101.

13. Against, for instance, Payne, “Surrejoinder,” pp. 101-104.

14. See Walter Liefeld, “Women and the Nature of Ministry,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 30 (1987): 51.

15. See the discussion of K. H. Rengstorf, “*Didasko*,” *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ten vols., ed. O. Kittel and O. Friedrich (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-1976), vol. 2, p. 157.

16. Despite Payne’s objections (“Surrejoinder,” pp. 107-108), Acts 8:21 is a valid illustration of the point at issue: that two words, connected by *oudé* (“nor”), can both depend on an object that follows the second only. The nature of the relationship of the two words and the fact that the object takes the case demanded by the second word only is immaterial. On the latter point, see Herbert Weir Smyth, *Greek Grammar* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1920), who notes specifically that in such cases the object will take the case demanded by the nearer verb (p. 1634). Payne objects further that the word order with *teach* separated from *man* by six words militates against construing them together. But not only is Greek word order notoriously flexible in such areas, but Paul has probably thrust *teach* forward in the sentence for the sake of an emphatic contrast with *learn* in verse 11: “Let the women learn, but, as for teaching. . . .”

17. The purpose clause in Titus 2:4, “in order that they might train young women to love their husbands . . .,” shows that the “teaching” of verse 3 is restricted to teaching young women.

18. See particularly George W. Knight III, “*Authenteo*” in Reference to Women in 1 Timothy 2:12,” *New Testament Studies* 30 (1984): 143-157, and Leland Edward Wilshire, “The TLG Computer and Further Reference to *Authenteo*” in 1 Timothy 2:12,”

New Testament Studies 34 (1988): 120-134. Despite the different methodological presuppositions—Knight includes only the verb, Wilshire all words from the authen root—and consequent broader scope of Wilshire’s work, Wilshire comes to essentially the same conclusion as Knight: that the verb, during the New Testament period, was coming to mean “exercise authority/power/rights.”

Payne’s attempt to dispute these findings (particularly in the case of the first-century b.c. papyrus BGU 1208) is unconvincing (“Surrejoinder,” pp. 108-110). Particularly, he fails to come to grips with the fact that the verb is overwhelmingly used in Patristic Greek to mean “have authority,” “exercise authority” (see G. W. Lampe, *Patristic Greek Lexicon* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968], p. 262). And while Payne notes one occurrence of the verb in Chrysostom in the sense “domineer,” he fails to note Chrysostom’s other uses of the word, some of them with the neutral meaning of “have authority” (see Wilshire, “1 Timothy 2:12,” pp. 131-132).

19. For this objection, see Liefeld, “Women and the Nature of Ministry,” p. 52.

20. Payne, “Surrejoinder,” pp. 104-107; see also his paper, read at the 1988 Evangelical Theological Society Meeting, “Oude in 1 Timothy 2:12.”

21. Payne, “Surrejoinder,” p. 104 (*italics his*).

22. We will not examine the texts here, but they are as follows: Romans 2:28; 4:15; 8:7, 10; 9:7, 16; 11:21; 1 Corinthians 2:6; 3:2; 4:3; 5:1; 6:5; 11:14, 16; 14:21; 15:13, 16, 50; 2 Corinthians 3:10; 7:12; Galatians 1:1, 12, 17; 2:3, 5; 3:28 (twice); 4:14; 6:13; Philippians 2:16; 1 Thessalonians 2:3; 5:5; 2 Thessalonians 3:8; 1 Timothy 2:12; 6:7, 16. As an example, we may cite a verse that Payne claims to parallel 1 Timothy 2:12—Romans 4:15: “where there is no law neither [oude] is there transgression.” Payne is right when he says that we have here two separate items that form a single coherent idea, but the two things, “law” and “transgression,” remain separate items and do not interpret one another in the way Payne argues for in 1 Timothy 2:12. That is, Paul does not mean “law of a transgression sort”; the two clearly do not modify one another.

23. Russell C. Prohl, *Woman in the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1957), pp. 31-32; Joyce Baldwin, *Women Likewise* (London: Falcon, 1973), pp. 21-22; N. J. Hommes, “Let Women Be Silent in the Church: A Message Concerning the Worship Service and the Decorum to be Observed by Women,” *Calvin Theological Journal* 4 (1969): 13.

24. Gordon Fee, “Reflections on Church Order in the Pastoral Epistles, with Further Reflections on the Hermeneutics of Ad Hoc Documents,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 28 (1985): 142-148. This statement, found also in Fee’s commentary on the pastorals, is widely quoted.

25. This represents a change from my earlier view (see “Rejoinder,” pp. 203-204).

26. This general approach is taken by a great many interpreters. See, for instance, Letha Scanzoni and Nancy Hardesty, *All We’re Meant to Be: A Biblical Approach to Women’s Liberation* (Waco, TX: Word, 1974), p. 37; Aida Besançon Spencer, “Eve at Ephesus [Should Women be ordained as pastors according to the First Letter to Timothy 2:11-15?],” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 17 (1974): 216-222, and *Beyond the Curse*, pp. 84-91; Payne, “Libertarian Women,” pp. 185-197; Scholer, “1 Timothy 2:9-15,” p. 211; Evans, *Women in the Bible*, pp. 104-106; Alan Padgett, “Wealthy Women at Ephesus, 1 Timothy 2:8-15 in Social Context,” *Interpretation* 41 (1987): 25-27; Roger L. Omansen, “The Role of Women in the New Testament Church,” *Review and Expositor* 83 (1986): 23-24; Gilbert Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1985), pp. 179-181.

27. See Towner, “Gnosis and Realized Eschatology,” p. 110.

28. Verse 14 is frequently labelled “typological,” on the analogy of Paul’s other use of the deception of Eve in 2 Corinthians 11:3 (e.g., Padgett, “Wealthy Women at Ephesus,” p. 25). While this is close to our view, we must point out that 2 Corinthians 11:3 has an explicit “just as . . .” construction that is lacking here.

29. See Spencer, *Beyond the Curse*, pp. 89-91; Evans, p. 104.

30. Although it has been argued that *gar* (“for”) introduces simply an explanation, Paul much more often uses the word, particularly in contexts like this, with a causal meaning (“I am not permitting this . . . because . . .”). See Moo, “Rejoinder,” pp. 202-204, arguing against Payne, “Libertarian Women,” pp. 175-177. See also Payne’s “Surrejoinder,” pp. 110-111.

31. Paul King Jewett, *Man as Male and Female* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1975), pp. 119-126; Karen W. Hoover, “Creative Tension in 1 Timothy 2:11-15,” *Brethren Life and Thought* 22 (1977): 163-165; Catholic Biblical Association of America’s Task Force on the Role of Women in Early Christianity, “Women and Priestly Ministry: The New Testament Evidence,” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 41 (1979): 612.

32. Scholer’s objection that Paul’s use of Genesis is selective (“1 Timothy 2:9-15,” pp. 208-211) is hardly to the point. The New Testament use of the Old Testament is always selective, since only specific points, not the interpretation of Old Testament passages per se, are at stake. The question is whether the Old Testament data selected really do relate to the issue involved.

33. The argument of some is that Paul viewed the prohibitions of verse 12 as temporary, culturally-related accommodations to the status of men and women under the curse of Genesis 3. But this line of argument founders on two counts: (1) Paul appeals here to the situation not after the fall, but before it (even Eve’s deception is, technically, pre-fall [Bacchiocchi, *Women in the Church*, p. 180]), and (2) Paul, while anxious that Christians maintain a credible witness and not offend those without, would not, we think, in the new age that had dawned, treat people and require them to do things as if they were still under the curse. Nor is it clear that redemption nullifies the role relationship established at creation, as Ruth A. Tucker and Walter L. Liefeld suggest in *Daughters of the Church, Women and Ministry from New Testament Times to the Present* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1987), p. 451. Rather, redemption enables men and women to relate to one another as God originally intended (see Matthew 19:1-9).

Furthermore, as Bertil Gärtner points out, Paul grounds the submission of women to men in the facts of redemption (Ephesians 5:22-24), not in the curse or even creation only (“*Didaskalos: The Office, Man and Woman in the New Testament*,” *Concordia Journal* 8 [1982]: 59-60).

34. See, for instance, Scholer, “1 Timothy 2:9-15,” pp. 208-211.

35. If, however, it were established that head-coverings for women are more directly involved in the appeal to creation, then exegetical faithfulness and hermeneutical consistency would demand not that we ignore the commands in both 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 and 1 Timothy 2:12, but that we obey both. We are all for consistency, but consistency may well be better attained by obeying more Biblical commandments than we now do rather than seeing more of them as cultural accommodations (against, for instance, Fee, “*Reflections on Church Order*,” pp. 150-151).

36. See Towner, “*Gnosis and Realized Eschatology*,” p. 111; James G. Sigountos and Myron Shank, “*Public Roles for Women in the Pauline Church: A Reappraisal of the Evidence*,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 26 (1985): 289-298.

37. Grant R. Osborne, “*Hermeneutics and Women in the Church*,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 20 (1977): 348.

38. See, for instance, H. P. Liddon, *Explanatory Notes on St. Paul's First Epistle to Timothy* (London: Longmans, Green, 1897), p. 20; Williams, *Apostle Paul*, p. 113; Payne, "Libertarian Women," pp. 177-179.

39. Henry Alford, *The Greek Testament*, four vols. (London: Rivingstons, 1865-1876), vol. 3, p. 820.

40. The preposition *dia* ("through") would designate "attendant circumstances."

41. See, in more detail, my "Interpretation," pp. 70-72; Robert Falconer, "1 Timothy 2:14, 15: Interpretative Notes," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 88 (1941): 376-378; Scholer, "1 Timothy 2:9-15," pp. 195-202.

We will here compare Miller with the article, "What Does It Mean Not to Teach or Have Authority Over Men" by Douglas Moo. Moo maintains that this passage does impose "two restrictions on the ministry of women: they are not to teach Christian doctrine to men and they are not to exercise authority directly over men in the church" and that these restrictions "restrictions are permanent, authoritative for the church in all times and places and circumstances as long as men and women are descended from.Â Rabbincal students were generally preparing for a teaching ministry, 'wise men' and 'leaders' ALREADY were in teaching/authority roles. So, the very cast that this imperative is set in suggests a FUTURE teaching ministry for those women who learned in the proper fashion of students. This does not mean that women are gullible or that they are all more easily deceived than men. If all women are more easily deceived, why would they be allowed to teach children (who are easily deceived) and other women (who are supposedly more easily deceived)? The text simply says that women are not to teach men or have spiritual authority over men because Eve was deceived. God has chosen to give men the primary teaching authority in the church.Â The only activity women are restricted from is teaching or having spiritual authority over men. This precludes women from serving as pastors to men. This does not make women less important, by any means, but rather gives them a ministry focus more in agreement with Godâ€™s plan and His gifting of them.