

Instructions on Worship

1 Tim 2:1-15

The content of this passage contains some controversial views that offends many, and fulfills others. In the first 2 verses Paul is urging Timothy his partner to command the pastors and church elders under his care to pray not only for themselves, but for all those in authority, and this includes praying for the evil Roman government of Nero. So often Christians today complain about the government, but instead of complaining, Paul is urging Christians to pray for the government. Sometimes government makes decisions we do not agree with, but it is still best to pray. In verse 4 we learn of the reason why Paul is urging that Christians pray for all those in authority. It is the will of God that everyone comes to repent and faith in Jesus Christ. In verse 5, Paul says something that offended the early Gnostics, as well as it offends the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Paul says there is one God. Mormons believe in many gods, and believe they themselves will be like God. In verse eight Paul says that he wants men everywhere to lift up their hands in prayer. Some charismatic circles use this verse in aid to their debate that those who do not lift their hands during worship are not right with God. I do not think that Paul was referring to worship here, but more so to prayer.

In verses 9-10, Paul is urging that women in churches do not rely so much on their beauty, but more so on their good works. Paul does not want women to only be looked at as sex objects. Unfortunately, as Dr. MacArthur and Hank Hanegraaf have pointed out, some in evangelical Christianity

do not follow these verses. In some ways, I find advantages to schools such as Pensacola Christian College whom being very conservative in nature has dress codes that all women must follow. I wish that some liberal Christian colleges adhered to such standards, because by doing so would place many men out of their lusting misery. Women need to be known for their good works, and not for their attractiveness. Unfortunately, it may appear that in much of evangelical Christianity, their looks seem to be more of a positive influence than their deeds. In verses 11-12 Paul is stating the truth with total dignity. Women are not to teach or have any kind of authority over a men in ministry. This command is not thus for the church at Corinth or for other churches of Paul's day but for all churches and most ministry functions. These commands are not culture concerns, since if they were the rest of the instructions of Paul's letters should also be culture concerns. There is a psychological term called Selective Perception, and this term says that people only see what they wish to see and shut out what they wish to shut out. In verses 13-14 Paul is reminding his audience of the Genesis account. And in that account Adam was formed first and Eve was formed as his helper, even before the fall (Gen 2:18). The woman was deceived first by the devil in Gen 3, and Paul reminds his audience of this, and because of this, woman should never teach or have authority over a man in most ministries. These instructions in this passage are not for some ancient culture, but for the culture of all generations as Paul has vividly made clear in this passage.

Questions

1. In verse 2, Paul urges the church to pray for the government. This was hard for Paul to say, since in his day Christians were under much persecution, many even fed to lions (a horrible way to die) under the command of Nero. Do you think that churches should seriously consider praying for the government? Of all the churches I have been at, only one seriously prayed for the government on a weekly basis. The church may have tension towards the government resulting in a lack of prayer for them, but its no secret that we do not have a Nero government.
2. In verse 8, Paul wants everyone to lift their hands in prayer. Some Charismatic churches use this verse (in aid) of their view that all people should be lifting their hands or becoming emotional during worship and if they are not then something is not right in their walk with the Lord. What do you think Paul means here? Is he referring to organized church worship, or are we worshiping God in our times with him?
3. Some conservative Christian colleges have extremely strict dress code rules for men & women. Yet, other Christian Colleges, being far more on the liberal side, have very light dress code rules, which has resulted in some of the women who attend these liberal colleges, unfortunately being known MORE for their beauty (dressing sexy) above their good deeds. Not to exclude tempting men to lust at them because of the way they dress. Are these liberal colleges violating Paul's

suggestions in 9-10? Or were these instructions only for that church and culture? Discuss appropriate dress code, and what you think Paul meant in 9-10.

4. Looking at verses 11-12, & 1 Cor 14, it seems clear that a woman is not to teach or have authority over a man in ministry. For many centuries, Christians did not doubt Paul's writings. However, many churches in the contemporary age have neglected these instructions, and argue that they only pertain to a certain culture or setting. If these instructions are not valid for today, why not bind the other parts of Paul's letter(s) in to an ancient culture? Or, are we using our **selective-perception** in viewing the book of Timothy?