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We are living in a very controversial time in church on whether women should or should not be prohibited to lead in the church and also teach men. Although more churches have become very progressive and have egalitarian views, there are still many that are complementarian and believe that women can only lead under men if they are allowed to lead at all and they would not be allowed to preach during a service that have men there. This belief system is derived from a writing of Paul's in 1 Timothy 2. Not only does Paul say that women are able to pray and prophecy in Corinthians 11 as long as their head is covered but his text in 1 Timothy 2 seems to be addressing a cultural condition. Both of these points seem to prove that Paul is not prohibiting women of teaching in church. Due to the fact that scripture prohibiting women to preach and teach men was written at a time when women were not allowed to study and we are now in a different time where this is no longer an issue, women should be able to teach men in the church.

Every epistle that has been written addresses a specific matter occurring in that culture. Paul's letter to Timothy concerning the women in Ephesus should not be viewed different than other epistles. A common theme in majority of my sources is the fact that women were not educated on religious matters. During those Biblical times, Greek men often married women that were more than a decade younger than them so due to the age gap, men already doubted that women even had the ability to learn and grasp certain concepts. Therefore men mostly considered intellectual activity a primarily male exercise (Keener 747). Women were also less

likely to be literate even if they were in the same social class as men. Some women were allowed to be disciples but were not trained in rhetoric so even if they had knowledge on certain concepts, they weren't trained on public speaking so they would not know how to properly communicate the teaching. 1 Timothy 2:12 states, "I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man. She must remain quiet." There was a rise in false prophets and teachers in the community of Ephesus and often times these false teachers who were misinformed about scripture targeted women especially those that were wealthy and would attempt to teach women false doctrine. Being that women were less informed in scripture, they would believe the false teachings. Paul knew this was an issue; one that he addressed in the opening of 1 Timothy. It is clear from the very beginning of 1 Timothy, Paul is writing this epistle to mostly address the spreading of false doctrines because "it promotes controversial speculations rather than advancing God's work" (1 Tim 1:4). Paul also addresses that people want to be teachers of the law but do not know what they are speaking about or what they are affirming. This serves as a precursor to Paul addressing women of Ephesus in 1 Timothy 2.

Paul's command should be examined more closely in retrospect to the culture and position of the people in Ephesus that he is addressing. Paul's warning in this context makes perfect sense. If the main concern is for false doctrine to not be spread and for people who do not know what they are speaking about to stop teaching then his temporary resolution is to forbid women from teaching. His only fear and concern is women spreading false doctrine due to their lack of wisdom as a result from not being taught and women being targeted by false prophets. This was a short term temporary fix and not a law that should be interpreted as a mandate for all women. Paul's long-term solution was stated in 1 Timothy 2:11 when he says, "a woman should

learn in quietness and in full submission.” In the culture, women were valued for meekness and quietness but of course just as any teacher, they expected their students to learn quietly and submissively as a sign of respect. The very important part of this scripture to note is that Paul instructs women to learn. This is a long term solution and will be very important to stop women from getting targeted by false teachers. This would also allow women to eventually teach because they have the education from learning. This could make us wonder why would Paul instruct women to learn if he did not believe women should speak or teach. It would be pointless but that is an argument to show that Paul does not in fact believe that women should be banned from speaking or teaching (Celoria 1). Paul is commanding that women learn and instructing that at this current time they should not teach. The context of these instructions clearly depicts that it was culturally conditioned. When 1 Timothy 2:9 instructs dressing modestly and not having ones hair braided, being covered in gold, pearls or expensive clothes, many people would argue that this is a timeless command due to the culture but for reasons unbeknownst to me, women being unable to teach is not always seen as a timeless command (Boyd & Eddy 259).

Another part of 1 Timothy 2:12 is that women cannot assume authority over men. This part of scripture would have many people move from being a strict complementarian to a soft complementarian. Many churches would allow women to teach or preach in church but only to other women so at a women’s event for example or women could be in leadership but a man would be overseeing them. Authority can be seen in a very negative light. The Greek word “authenticia” could mean “perpetrator” or “master., someone who has complete power and control over another. This is another instance when Paul is addressing the women in Ephesus who are being domineering in the community (Davis 1). The rest of that scripture then bring the creation

into the text and states that Adam was created first before Eve and Adam was also not the one who was deceived. It was women and that is where sin originated. There is a vast amount of controversy over this text and can be taken in ways that would support complementarian views but once again context is very important. If people believe that men domineer or have authority over women because a man was created first then they would also have to believe animals have authority over humans since animals were created first but we know that ideology is not true. Paul's epistles often show a trend in referring back to the creation story in ways that are related to his concern for specific churches and congregations (Davis 1). Paul did this for Rome and Corinth. He is doing the same thing for Ephesus. His focus on who was deceived proves his original concern. Adam was created first and was given the instructions from God not to eat from the Tree of knowledge of good and evil. Eve did not get the direct order from God but she was told by Adam. Eve's level of misunderstanding and not being knowledgeable of the grave importance of being obedient to that order allowed her to be deceived by the serpent who can be compared to a false teacher. She then took the teaching and persuaded Adam to also eat the fruit which resulted in the Fall. This reference of the creation story just further supported why Paul did not want women to teach during that time because miseducation by false prophets can cause women to spread that which is Paul's mission to stop that from occurring.

If Paul's command truly meant that women could never lead or teach in church over men then people are supporting the idea that the Bible has inconsistencies because there are examples of women in ministry, women teaching and women leading men. 1 Timothy 3 lists qualities that overseers in the church must obtain and he includes women in this text which would be a contradiction to his command for women to not lead. In the book of Acts, there are many

references to women teaching, leading and speaking. Acts 2:17-18 speaks about women who will prophesy. Acts 16:14-15 shows Lydia responding to the Gospel of the Lord and even being responsible for helping her household convert. This would not have been possible without teaching and preaching to her household. For the conversion to happen, there had to be men in the household who had to submit to her teaching. In Acts 18:26, Apollos is described as receiving instruction from Priscilla and Aquila (Celoria 1). There is Deborah in the Bible as well which shows in Judges 4:4, Deborah held judicial authority and was permitted by God. Deborah functioned as a judge where people came to her. She proclaimed the word of the Lord, she was a prophet and pronounced blessings and curses (Davis 1). Deborah would not have been able to administer any of this without the unction of God. This would pose a dilemma believing that the Bible has such contradictions if we were to look at 1 Timothy 2:12 in its traditional reading.

Paul is addressing very specific concerns with a specific group of women in Ephesus. This epistle to Timothy should be seen in a way that is offering Timothy a temporary solution to help assist the issue of false teachings being spread. 1 Timothy 2:9-12 cannot be taken as a law that should apply to modern day because culture is different. Women have a strong biblical education and cannot be deceived by false teachings nor spread such teachings. If Paul's teachings are being viewed as a universal command then there raises concern about biblical contradictions. Therefore women should be able to teach and preach to men in church.

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