

**Text: 1 Timothy 2:1-15 (NIV)**

<sup>1</sup>I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—  
<sup>2</sup>for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and  
holiness. <sup>3</sup>This is good, and pleases God our Savior, <sup>4</sup>who wants all men to be saved and to come to  
a knowledge of the truth. <sup>5</sup>For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man  
Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time.  
<sup>7</sup>And for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle—I am telling the truth, I am not  
lying—and a teacher of the true faith to the Gentiles. <sup>8</sup>I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands  
in prayer, without anger or disputing. <sup>9</sup>I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and  
propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, <sup>10</sup>but with good deeds,  
appropriate for women who profess to worship God. <sup>11</sup>A woman should learn in quietness and full  
submission. <sup>12</sup>I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent.  
<sup>13</sup>For Adam was formed first, then Eve. <sup>14</sup>And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman  
who was deceived and became a sinner. <sup>15</sup>But women will be saved through childbearing—if they  
continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.

**Theme: God Made Us Male and Female**

We live in a society, which is trying to erase the differences between male and female. There are things in the relative recent past which are unimaginable today. For instance, when my mother got married, she had to give up her job at Johnson's Wax because in the early 60's married women were not allowed to work in the factory. An elderly member of our church (Clare Geisler), who died a few years ago, was the first woman executive at Northwestern Mutual Life. She never married because if she did so, she would have had to give up that position. Both of those things would not even be allowed today.

On the other hand, there are things, which are almost unimaginable to people of my generation today. When I was in college, one of the things that would get a young man quickly kicked out of the university was to enter the women's dorm unescorted. When we had co-ed dorms, they were floor by floor, and the guys still had to be escorted on the girls floors. When I took my son to college earlier this month, I was a bit surprised that the floors are now intermingled with guys and girls (at least they are not in the same rooms, yet).

In today's secular world the distinctions between men and women are being erased in many ways. There is both good and bad in that. But the Bible shows that in both the family and the church, there are distinctions between men and women. Our Savior has created us male and female and given us different roles to His glory.

I. When it comes to our salvation, there is no difference between men and women.

In Romans 3:23 Paul writes, "*There is no difference, for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.*" All of us are sinners, who have gone astray from God's ways. After Adam and Eve sinned, God confronted both of them with their sin. We all fall into sin. None of us can save ourselves. Paul goes on in in Romans 3:24 to write that we are all justified freely by God's grace through the redemption that came by in Jesus Christ. There is no difference at all in how any of us are saved. We are all saved by faith that Jesus Christ paid for all of our sins on Calvary. Paul also makes that point

in our text where he writes, *“There is one God and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all.”* Paul also bring out this fact that when it comes to salvation there is no difference in Galatians 3:27,28, *“All of you who were baptized in Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”*

However, the Bible also speaks of different roles for men and women in the family and in the church. I found it interesting that there is a lot of similarity between this section which speaks of the roles in the church, and Ephesians 5, which speaks of the roles of men and women in the family.

## II. The man’s role in both is a Christ-like headship.

This is a big problem in the church today. In other religions, such as Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism, and the Moslem religion, men are very active in their faith. This was also the case in Christianity until about 150 years ago. Somehow with the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, church became an institution for women and children. Many men stopped going to church or started going only at their wife’s urging. The church has sometimes evolved into something that makes men feel uncomfortable. Solid doctrine has been replaced by discussions on feelings. Hymns with good bass sections have been replaced with love songs to Jesus, which often sound almost romantic. Even Christian book stores have grown to resemble a JoAnne Fabric’s store. Even in our own church body the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League has fared better than the Lutheran Laymen’s League. It is only recently that Lutheran Hour ministries has seen the importance of men’s ministries.

But why is it important that men are not just active, but take a role of religious headship in the family and the congregation? There is a secular answer. Studies over the last 20 years have shown that if the father does not attend church, less than one child in 50 will become a regular church-goer, no matter if the mother brought the children to church every Sunday. On the other hand almost 75% of children will become regular church-goers if the father attends church, even if the mother never attends. The reason why so few of our young people attend church today might simply be because they have never seen their fathers attend church. The Bible especially gives this responsibility to Fathers. In Ephesian 6:4 Paul writes, *“Father do not exasperate your children; instead bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.”* In our text Paul writes, *“I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling.”* It makes a big difference in their spiritual lives when young people see men at prayer in worship, and when they see that the men in their lives are men of faith. Paul also makes the point that their lives should be holy and without quarreling. This Greek word for “holy” is not used often in the Bible. It means clean hands, which are not polluted by anger or quarreling. In essence here the men of the congregation should be imitators of “the man” Jesus Christ who came to serve and give His life as a ransom for sinners like us.

## II. On the other hand the woman’s role is a submission as the church submits to Christ.

This is not very popular today at all. In premarriage counseling when I discuss Ephesians 5 where Paul writes, *“Wives, submit to your husbands in everything,”* no one likes that. In our text Paul writes, *“Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness.”* Those are two very counter-cultural statements today. In these verses Paul is clear that he does not permit women to become pastors in

the church. It is very tempting to say that Paul was wrong. We know better today. Even in our church it gets harder every year to explain, that based on these verses and others in the Bible, we don't have women pastors in the LCMS. It is very contrary to our way of thinking today.

But such humility and submission is a general Christian trait. Jesus blesses the humble throughout the Gospels. In the New Testament we are called to submit ourselves to all kinds of authorities. In these verses Paul writes that the beauty of a woman should not be in her braided hair, clothes or jewelry, but faith, love, holiness, and self-control. The Proverbs end with the same kind of thought where it says, "*Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.*" (Proverbs 31:30,31) A woman who has a humble faith in our Lord Jesus, who is full of good works, and love, is a reflection of the love of the church, of how we are to love each other and love our Savior Jesus Christ.

When I looked at today's readings, I realized that every year, I shied away from this lesson, probably for good reason. It is very counter-cultural today. But God's ways are never our ways. Every age has thought that it knew better than what God gives to us in His word. Our day is no different. This is God's Word, and His Word stands forever. When we meditate on it and take it to heart, we realize, God's Word and ways always bless us. God did makes us male and female, and His desire is that in our roles as men and women in the family and the church, that we are a picture to the world of the love that there is between Christ and His Church. May God enable us to reflect that perfect love in our families and in our congregation.

Amen.

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