

Gospel shaped gender

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[0 : 00] Thanks very much, Mark. Good morning, everybody. Nice to see you. I wasn't quite sure who was here because I was sitting at the front and I didn't look around, but very nice to see you.

And if you're at home watching, I guess there might be some people who are at home. So hello to you. Let me just organize a little bit here. We're going to continue the, where am I? Click.

Continuing this series in Paul's first letter to Timothy in the New Testament of the Bible.

And there's two things this talk doesn't need. One, it doesn't need an introduction because an introduction is designed to convince the hearers that there's something that's relevant and something that's of interest to them.

And actually, the topic that we have is of greatly of interest and relevance. It's about gender. It doesn't need an introduction because it's certainly not irrelevant. I guess if you were to look on your app for the BBC news page, it would almost certainly be something about gender or transgender on there. It's absolutely relevant.

The matter of man and woman and body, the identity and role and meaning of what it is to be a man or a woman and whether you can actually separate the body from the identity of what it is.

[1 : 23] That's all a hot topic today. I don't have to introduce it and make you interested. You're already interested. Relationships, sexual relationships, what form they take, the meaning and nature of sex, whether penetrative sex is nothing more than a casual leisure activity, which is what it seems to be in our culture, or whether there is something actually very deep and profound and even transcendent in the whole matter of sexual relationships.

And the matter of gender roles, the role of men. What is manliness? What is it to be a man? Is this really nothing but a way of saying power and abuse?

And what is the role of women? They're not mere objects for exploitation by men. You think of the Me Too, hashtag Me Too thing. The role of women. What is it to be truly feminine, to be truly a woman?

And Christian women. I'm very conscious of the Christian women in our congregation here who are thinking, how do I find my way as a Christian woman? I want to please Jesus Christ in this confusing world.

For younger women, what should my aim be? Should I be aiming for just to have a career because that's what all the women around me have? Should I be aiming to be independent of men?

[2 : 51] The old saying, a woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle. I mean, is that how Christian women should think about men? Or should I be doing, should I actually be thinking, I don't want a career, I want to be married, I want to have babies.

And actually some very well qualified and very capable women actually have said to me, you know, I could have a career but what I really want is to be married and to have babies. And women in the church, women are equally saved, are of equal value, men and women.

I noticed our Bible reading was at pains to point out that Christ didn't just come to save men as a gender, but men, mankind as a species.

And then as a church we have a little bit of a thought about this because up on the wall there is a tablet erected by the friends of the railway mission and members of her family in loving memory of Mrs. George Gates, founder and president of Brighton Railway Mission.

So our railway mission was founded and led by a woman. And then you think, what are we to make of that? Why do we no longer have women elders and pastors?

[4 : 10] And why do we have women deacons? So there's a lot here about the way, I don't have to interest you in this subject, you're already interested in it. That's one thing it doesn't need, it doesn't need an introduction.

And secondly, it doesn't need an apology because the Bible does speak clearly about gender. It does say that the human race has been made binary, men and women.

He made them male and female. It does talk about the reality of being a man or a woman. And it does say that my body is me, hence the resurrection.

There isn't a separation between the real me and my body. My body is me in a real sense. The Bible does talk about sexuality and the Bible does talk about gender roles.

And if you want to just put it in a very headline-y way, the Bible does talk about male headship. Now we need to unpack that a bit, but that's what the Bible does talk about. And I'm not going to apologize for that.

[5 : 11] And I'm perfectly aware that if you're watching at home or maybe listening to a recording, you may pick up on this and you say, well, I certainly don't believe that and I don't agree with it.

And if you're watching or listening, you say, well, I don't agree with that, let me just say what I'm trying to do. In this, I may well be setting out a view that conflicts with yours.

I don't mean offense or disrespect to you, but it is my task to tell people what the Bible says. That's my task. And I'll be sued for negligence by the Lord Almighty if I don't do that.

And so what I'm going to try and do this morning is to set out what the Bible says. I hope truthfully and I also hope attractively, but I'm going to do that with or without your agreement.

And I'm not going to apologize for that. And Christians don't need to apologize for thinking and believing and living differently to the world around. Christians have always been different.

[6 : 11] They've always been on the margin to some degree or another. And if it's the same today, so be it. It's part of following Christ that you follow him no matter what other people say.

And in the end, it's my conviction that Christianity will be on the right side of history, that history will say they were right all the time. Everybody else had got the wrong end of the stick.

And it's the Christians who believed what God said who got the right end of the stick. And their testimony is that living God's way is actually the most satisfying way and actually the one that enables human beings to flourish the best.

Well, that's something we put to the test every day in our lives, isn't it? And my conviction is that if we're looking at the Bible, this is a book written by God. And it's the expert book on humanity.

It's the expert book on life. And God knows what structures he put into creation. He made everything. This is the Maker's Manual. And if you stick to the Maker's Manual, you won't go far wrong.

[7 : 17] God says it, and he knows what he's talking about. That's my conviction. And that's why, secondly, it doesn't need an apology, so I'm not apologizing. My plan this morning is a couple of things to get us going.

So these are the zeroth points. A not-my-job thing, which I'll explain in a moment. And I do need to look into the context of these verses. So if you noticed when they were read, you might have jumped at several things.

It said, what does that mean? What does that mean? Why does he say that? And I think it's very important to put these words into context. So I'll take quite a little time to put them into context. And my main point is going to be that the gospel restores us to the created order.

That's going to be my main point. And then we can sort of tease that out in two ways. From the text, power to dress or profess and bless.

So they might help you remember it. And then a 2D's, discipleship or domineering. So those are the two points more specifically to draw out from the text.

[8 : 24] So let's get into this then. The text is mostly about the reality of being a woman for God. That's what it says, isn't it?

It starts off saying, I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer. And then it says, likewise, women to dress with modesty, with decency and propriety. And then it talks about a woman's role in the church.

A woman should learn in quietness, etc. It's mostly about the reality of being a Christian woman. How to think, how to live, and how to be a woman for God.

But Paul is motivated by the particular situation in the church at Ephesus. And I'd like to suggest to you that he speaks this way because, not just on account of the women, but on account of the men. And I'd like to suggest to you that if the men were doing their job properly and fulfilling their roles, he might not have to speak to the women the way he speaks to the women.

[9 : 31] Let's just put that round again. If the men were doing their job, I don't think he would have to speak to the women the way he speaks to the women. And I've got a picture here.

Have you seen on Facebook or YouTube these wonderful clips of Not My Job, where builders, these are videos taken by builders, where a builder comes in to do the floor after the heating engineer has put in the heating, and he's left pipes over the door so that it won't open or something like that.

And the previous guy went away saying, it's not my job to sort that out. And he's left a mess for somebody else. And here's a rather lovely picture, isn't it? Somebody's doing a white line down the road.

And you can't see it. There was a branch that was laying across the curb there. And rather than lift the branch out of the way, he just painted the line round it. And what he said, it's not my job to lift branches out the way.

And he's just gone round it like that, you see. And there's loads of really funny things like that on YouTube. Not my job.

[10 : 42] That wasn't my job. I'm not going to do that. And here, I think he's saying to the men, you have a job and make sure you're doing it. So he says in verse 8, guys, are you praying?

I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer without anger or disputing. Are you in good fellowship, men? Are you getting on well together and praying together?

Are you leading in the matter of prayer so that if there's a prayer meeting, the guys are going to be there and they're going to be praying? Or are you going to say, no, it's not my job?

And I think he's going to extend that thought to families. Are the men leading and providing in families?

Are they being husbands and fathers and enabling these women who want to have families to have families because the men are standing up saying, I will take that responsibility rather than saying, not my job.

[11 : 43] And in the church, that the men are leading and stepping up to take responsibility. That's why I asked Brenda if she would read chapter 3 verse 1 because he's saying, don't want the women stepping up and taking the responsibility.

Chapter 3 verse 1. But the elders should, there should be elders, there should be deacons, there should be men taking responsibility. And if they were doing that, this is my suggestion, then he wouldn't have to speak to the women quite the way he does.

And just to digress, I think with Mrs. George Gates, the founder of the railway mission, I would think if there had been men stepping up to found railway missions, Mrs. George Gates wouldn't have had to.

But bless her, she did, I think because the men didn't step up and say, oh, that's not my job to do that. Do you see what I mean? So that's my sort of zeroth point, not my job.

Important for the men to step up. Second thing, context. Now, we're going to spend a little while on context because it's essential to realize he has not written this to Calvary Evangelical Church in 2022.

[12 : 52] So he is not saying, oh, I know some of you women turn up in braided hair with golden pearls and expensive clothes and I'm going to say something to you. Because that's not the case.

It doesn't quite fit, does it? We're not. I just looked around very carefully when we came in and I thought on Zoom this morning, is Rosemary wearing earrings? I thought, I'm just better.

Yeah, I thought, well, I better just be careful what I say. But it's not specifically pointed at Calvary.

But we have to take on board the way it might fit or the way it does fit or the implications of it.

So let's just think about where it was written. It was written to the church in Ephesus. So there's a map on there. And that is where Ephesus is in what's nowadays Turkey. And there's a picture I got off the internet.

I think that's the library in Ephesus. You can look that up on the internet. We know some things about Ephesus. And this will help us to get a context of the sort of world that this church was living in, the sort of things that were going on around their heads.

[13 : 59] So Paul, I won't ask you to spend a lot of time on this because I've got a lot to say anyway. But in Acts 19 it is, Paul goes to Ephesus.

This is where there's the riot about the great goddess Artemis, or Diana I think is her other name, isn't it? Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

So this is a city in which there was a great goddess sort of presiding over it. And that tells us something straight off. That this is a city where female power is a thing. And I've got a little picture there of our own goddess. Anybody think who that might be? It's Nigella Lawson. Yes, it's the goddess of the kitchen. You notice the power dressing there. The page that I got it off, I got a picture of her power dressing to be on the telly. And then a picture of her going to the shops, which she looked completely different.

[14:57] But there she is sort of power dressing and posing as almost like a goddess, isn't she? In Acts 19 we also see, this is the bit where there were the Jewish exorcists who jumped on the guy and said, Oh, I know who Jesus is and I know who Paul is, but who on earth are you?

So there's a Jewish presence there in Ephesus. And we also know this is the place where people who became Christians had their magic scrolls and they burned them. And there was 50,000 drachmas worth. I can't remember what the calculation was. It's a quarter of a million pounds worth of scrolls that were burnt.

So we know that there were weird teachings around in Ephesus. And we know there's a lot of money around in Ephesus. So all those things are part of the world that they are inhabiting as a church.

Okay, so we're looking at context. And let's think about the more specific what's going on in the church. It's worth looking around in the letter to pick up some thoughts about this.

[16:06] So one of the things is that we've already come across there were false teachers. Now I think, and I didn't look this up, but I think it probably says who teach other things.

But in chapter 1, verse 3, Paul came straight in on this matter of false teachers, didn't he? I urged you when I came into Macedonia to stay there in Ephesus that you may command certain men not to teach other doctrines any longer, etc., etc.

So there are false teachers. And this is the first thing that Paul mentions about the church. You've got guys in there who are teaching nonsense. And you need to be careful about that.

You need to guard against that. And you remember as John Woods took us through this, he said they go on about the law and they distract people from the main points of the gospel.

And it's also worth noticing, do have a Bible there and look across at chapter 4, verse 3. It says about deceiving spirits, things taught by demons.

[17:10] Such teachings come through hypocritical liars whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

For everything God created is good and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving because it's consecrated by the word of God and prayer. So I think this is part of what's going on. There are teachers who are teaching it is forbidden to marry. Or let's put it the other way around. You can be more spiritual if you don't marry.

And if you enlarge on that thought, and I'm going to suggest there are some of these women who've picked on this and they become sort of super spiritual women and say, I'm not going to marry for the Lord and I'm better than you guys.

I'm better than the women who are married. A little bit like the Roman Catholic celibacy of priests. Yeah? In Roman Catholicism, the priests, who are sort of a cut above ordinary people, are supposed not to marry.

[18:19] And of course that creates huge problems because they want to marry. And then their sort of sexual desires get messed up all over the place and they can't keep the promise that they've made. I think that's sort of going on here.

Denying creation is good. Chapter 4, verse 4. And mangling conscience. That's what it says there. Consciences have been seared. The conscience is God speaking, maybe a little bit muffled, but God speaking inside every human being and saying, this is right and this is wrong. And conscience is a really powerful thing. If you've got a bad conscience, you'll know about it because you're living thinking, that was wrong.

I'm doing something wrong. I'm doing something wrong. That matters. And doing something you know inside from God is wrong.

But if you do it anyway, you damage your conscience. You sear your conscience. It's like searing. It's like when you burn yourself, you get a sort of scar. And the teachers are leading in this direction.

[19 : 26] I'll just say that again. To do something which you know on the inside is wrong, but doing it anyway. So we've got these false teachers around.

And I want us to say that we've got an issue of the women. Now, again, just looking at the context, into chapter 5, verse 3.

Give proper recognition to the women, the widows who are really in need. So there are some women that are deeply worthy of respect and are to be given proper recognition.

It actually says time, which means fear, reverence. Really respect these women. They are godly women. But there are other women in the church who are, in fact, chapter 5, verse 11, younger widows.

When their sensual desires overcome their dedication to Christ, they want to marry. They bring judgment on themselves because they've broken their first pledge. I think they've been got at by these teachers. And they said, we're going to be super spiritual.

[20 : 28] We're not going to get married. We're just going to do the Lord's work. We're never going to get married. And then they say, actually, I do want to get married. And they go back on what they promised the Lord in the first place. And it just gets a complete mess.

And these women, he says in 5, verse 13, they get into the habit of being idle. They go about from house to house. Not only do they become idlers, but gossips and busybodies, saying things they ought not to.

So there's this group of women who, they do no real work. I think they're being supported by the church from funds. They're sort of sponging off the church.

And they're just creating confusion. They're going around saying things they ought not to do. And I won't try and say everything that the person doing chapter 5 needs to say.

But let's just be conscious that there's an issue of the different sorts of women, the different groups of women. And there's some women that are really not being very helpful at all. They're going around just making trouble when they really could just get married and raise a family.

[21 : 33] Chapter 5, verse 14, I counsel younger widows to marry, to have children, to manage their homes, and give the enemy no opportunity for slander. Some have, in fact, already turned away to follow Satan.

So there's a real satanic power going on here influencing these women. They could get married, but they somehow don't.

And it just is spoiling things for them and for everybody else. And what I want to say is there seems to be a link between these false teachers and some of these women.

And if you look at 2 Timothy 3, verse 6, you can see, I admit it's not in 1 Timothy, but there seems to be something going on in the context in Ephesus.

Where am I? 2 Timothy 3, verse 6. These false teachers, these are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires.

[22 : 41] All I'm doing is just saying there seems to be a connection here between these false teachers and some of the women. And I don't think that that's beyond...

What am I trying to say? Beyond reason. I think you could imagine a situation where some of the women might be led astray like that.

And I think that's part of the context. So I've tried to set out a little bit of the context here into which he's speaking. False teaching, different groups of women, some of them being very, very unhelpful indeed, probably because they've been influenced by the false teachers.

So that was my way of introduction. Here's my main point. My main point is that the gospel takes us back to creation.

The gospel takes us back to creation. The way God made things in the first place is what the gospel takes us back to.

[23 : 48] The created order. Now, so first controversial point here, there is a created order. God made everything and he made it with an order and a structure.

And I'm thinking particularly of the way things fit together and the way people fit together. So I've got a little Tetris picture there. That one isn't fitting into place, but these do, don't they?

They lock together in certain ways. That's how they're built. And they go together in certain ways and that's sweet and beautiful. And if you're good at playing Tetris, you can win 100 points or whatever it is by fitting together the way they're supposed to fit together.

And my starting point is this, is that the Creator has a way of fitting together. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the Trinity, as all Christians believe.

I don't think you'd be a Christian if you didn't believe in the Trinity. But the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit fit together in a certain way. So the Father begets the Son.

[24 : 49] The Son doesn't beget the Father. The Father begets the Son. And the Spirit proceeds from the Father. The Father doesn't proceed from the Spirit. The Spirit proceeds from the Father. And the Son delights to do the Father's will.

It isn't the Son, sorry, it isn't the Father who does the Son's will. Jesus always says, I delight to do your will, O God. And such is His delight that the Father and Son work together in such perfect harmony that there's a beauty about that.

So there's an order and a structure within the Creator. So it's not surprising that there's an order and structure within the creation that He's made. And you get from the Father through the Son by the Spirit, for example.

And the world that He has made is a world of humans and animals and vegetables and minerals. and He's made a world in which there is such a thing as family and children and children are to obey their parents.

It is not that parents are to obey their children, is it? It isn't, is it? And yet you find that that can get out of kilter.

[26 : 03] But it is for children to obey their parents. That's the way it is. That's the way it is between the Father and the Son in the Trinity. The Father does not obey the Son.

The Son obeys the Father. That's the way it is. There's something deep about that and unchangeable about it. It's not negotiable. See what I mean?

It expresses itself in different ways but it is not negotiable. And between male and female there is an order and a way of relating which we'll say a bit more about in a moment but Paul refers to that. Adam was formed first then Eve. He says there was an order to it and that order signifies a way of relating together. There is male and female. They are equal but they're not interchangeable.

There is a role and a style and a way of fitting in which is particular to male and a role and a style and a fitting in which is particular to female. And Paul's point is that the church the church family should model this created order.

[27 : 15] When he says I don't allow a woman to teach he's not talking about primary schools. He's talking about the church. He's not talking about learning Greek. He's talking about the way the church goes.

And he's not talking about how it might be with your boss at work. I don't allow it. You know if you might have a female boss at work. I worked a long time with a female boss at work.

He's talking about the church. And the church should model the way the church as a family shall we say should model the way a family should be.

And I have a thought from Ellis Potter dear man who said in his labrie sort of way because if you're thinking don't like this it should be totally free.

There shouldn't be order. There shouldn't be any sort of fitting in like this. And Ellis in his very labrie sort of way says total freedom is death.

[28 : 15] Death. Interesting isn't it? If you had total freedom you don't have life and flourishing you have death because it's chaotic and nothing matters.

So anyway the gospel takes us back to creation. The created order which is good. and I'm going to stop on this a little bit and say in this impacts on each of our personal lives we have been put into a place where one of those Tetris blocks and we're to fit in in a certain way and that's what God has for us and that's the way we will get to heaven by fitting in and walking through our lives in that particular way.

That's the way we walk to our ultimate salvation. It isn't just a matter of how we arrange who does the shopping or something like this the way how we get to heaven by walking in the way that God has put us as a Tetris block into life.

Let's look for example at Timothy chapter 4 verse 16 how is he saved? How is he saved? And you're going to say by believing in Jesus Christ because it's a faithful and true saying that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners and I'm going to say amen to that he saved through faith in Jesus Christ.

But look at what he says in chapter 4 verse 16 Timothy you're a minister pray study your scriptures watch your life and doctrine closely persevere in them because if you do you will save both yourself and your hearers Timothy you will save yourself by doing what God has given you to do he's put you and your bitters in the Tetris puzzle of life is to be a minister you do what ministers do read your Bible pray look after people pray for them do all the things that ministers do that's the way you will save yourself that's your path through life to eternal salvation and Timothy might be saying surely there's a better road to heaven than this praying for all these difficult people preaching and everybody falls asleep making mistakes getting into conflicts

[30 : 52] I've got to be confronting these false teachers oh what a drag studying much studies of weariness to the flesh wouldn't it be just better to find some other way to heaven and Paul says this is your way to heaven do what God has given you to do you will save yourself through that and that's why I think well I do think it but that's actually what Paul is saying here in our text verse 15 women will be saved through childbearing if they continue in faith love and holiness with propriety now generally speaking he's talking in his particular context but he's saying for women the path to heaven is by following what it is to be a woman and for many but not for all that is via having a husband and a family for many but not for all that is by having a husband and a family that's the way you save yourself that's the way you're saved and you're going to say surely there's a better road to heaven than this

I mean come on emptying potties looking at poo day after day after day changing nappies being told when you've got a teenage daughter mum I hate you you're the worst mum in the whole world surely there's a better way to heaven than that and Paul says no the way you save yourself Christian woman is by being a Christian woman and for many but not all that's simply going to be having a family going through all the chores and the repetition and all the hassle you know being a taxi service well no let's start at the beginning shall we going around with this thing inside your tummy for nine months having this enormous pain of giving birth after nine months looking after potties and nappies and then being a taxi service to take them all over the place and then wondering where they are all this sort of thing that's the way you go to heaven and you'll be saved through that whole process so be encouraged stick to it do that knowing that you're doing God's will and that's and at the end of that road is a well done good and faithful servant because that's what God called you to do the gospel takes us back to creation chapter 5 verse 14 those younger women who on a point of principle says I'm not going to do that spirituality is not that sort of thing I'm not going to do that verse 5 14 he says you let satan in when you say things like that I counsel these women who can get married for whom there is the opportunity to get married not to resist that and chapter 2 verse 15 women will be saved through childbearing if they continue in faith and love and holiness with this word we'll come to in a minute propriety it actually is sort of sound thinking healthy thinking so that was my main point the gospel takes us back to creation and the way God has made us to fit in that's the way to do it don't resist that don't say

I follow that path and that's the way you will be saved that's my main point follow the road that God has put you on and made you for whether you're a man or a woman whether you're single whether you're married whatever that path is you follow that path okay so let's come specifically to the text and then I'm going to stop there's some specific areas in the text which I have said in the hope that it might be a little bit memorable power dress or profess to bless and then discipleship or domineer so let's take those one at a time so here's our goddess and the power dressing there I took from the internet these are Nigella Lawson high heels designed by Stella McCartney there we are just looking I want women to dress modestly wisely that's a word in there which is the same word as propriety at the end it means to think healthily sofronio or something like that and that's in that first text

I want women to dress modestly with I can't remember the Greek I did look it up decency good thinking not with this is all money this stuff braided hair gold pearls expensive clothes so I'm just imagining that there are some women in the church at Ephesus who really do the power dressing thing and I guess they probably turn up late for the service so the poor guy trembling at the front is thinking can we start yet and he makes a start and then she comes in the minute she walks in the joint you could tell she was you know that one real big spender like that and everybody turns around oh you know Mrs. So-and-so has arrived here and there's a sort of hush and she makes her way up to the front and says okay pastor carry on you see what I mean and I'm sort of caricaturing it but I'm trying to give you the sort of thing that I think he must be talking about and he's saying we

really really don't want that don't power dress don't come to church with the attitude of gaining power or gaining attention with the family of

[36 : 48] God by using feminine powers of adornment he says that's not the way for godly women to live and behave in the church of God there are several words here about beauty cosmeo from which I always think this is interesting because I'm interested in words from which we get cosmos and cosmetic the cosmos is the beautiful arrangement of the world and cosmetics are things that you put on your face or whatever to make you beautiful and there's several things here about adornment or dressing beautifully and so I think he's recognizing that there is a thing for women and I'm going to use this word beauty men have other ways of being nice but there's a thing about women uses the word glory and beauty and that's a particular womanly thing and he says well he's saying there is a way of being beautiful for God which is not in the amount of money you spend on you know the gold and the braided hair and the expensive clothes and the

Nigella Lawson high heels so he's making that point but he says adorn yourself with good deeds appropriate for women who profess reverence for God who people are saying you know I'm a woman of God that's the sort of woman I want to be professing and he says there is a real beauty in well he says good deeds the way you bless people the sort of blessing you are all around you he says do this with decency and with this word propriety healthy thinking and I just say that again the word for propriety here and in verse it's somewhere in verse 9 depending on how the NIV translated it it means thinking in a healthy way when you're choosing what to wear and how to behave and how to relate just thinking in a healthy way it's not a feeling word it's a thinking word and in chapter 5 verse 10 he says all sorts of good things that he gives a list these are the widows in chapter 5 verse 9 who've lived a life for God they're well known for their good deeds such as but not limited to bringing up children showing hospitality washing the feet of the saints which I presume is not literal but metaphorical yeah just looking out for people's needs and helping them washing the feet of the saints helping those that are in trouble devoting herself to all kinds of good deeds and that that's so rather than power dress profess to bless you know being beautiful in those particular sorts of ways all kinds of good deeds so that was the power dress and profess to bless and then the next bit which I'll take a little bit longer over is discipleship versus dominance so I'm getting into verse 11 where it says a woman should learn in quietness and full submission

I'm going to explain this translation because I don't think that can quite give you the right idea but it says a woman should learn in quietness and full submission I do not permit a woman to teach or have authority over a man she must be silent and I want to say something about that translation as well for Adam was formed first then Eve Adam was not the one deceived but it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner then he goes back to his point women if they follow God's path will find salvation if they continue in faith and love and holiness with sound thinking anyway let's come to this little bit in verse 11 then do learn a woman should learn so let's think about the learn it's a word linked to the idea of being a disciple so I'm going to say be a disciple of Jesus Christ learn from him and I think it was John Woods who pointed out that under the

Taliban women are not allowed to learn in Christianity women are encouraged to learn and I presume that learn means learn and grow and develop and mature and become fully more and more women of God and so I'm just going to say here's something for women to learn women don't try and be a man don't learn how to be a man of God learn how to be a woman of God men can't be women of God only women can be women of God and if you're a woman that's your calling to become a woman of God learn how to do that let's pick up on these two phrases in quietness and full submission so let's look at these two words you might read it and say this says total silence and exploitation please don't read it that way that's not what it's saying it might trigger in your mind oh that's what it's saying it's not what it's saying so try and un think that and let's see what it really says so let's look at the quietness bit

NIV doesn't help us by saying silent it doesn't translate the word as silent in other contexts and I don't know why it decides to do that there it's in chapter 2 verse 11 it says quietness same word as silent and it's related it's also in 2 Thessalonians 3 12 which I'd just like to remind myself of because it's a couple of days since I put this in my notes 2 Thessalonians 3 12 where it says we command you and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread you eat and the word for quietness is there translated settle down and I think that's a reasonable translation just settle down it doesn't mean silence like that it just means don't don't be jumping up and anxiously interrupting and everything just settle down and be calm not turbulent not causing trouble not you know

[44 : 08] Mrs so and so hold on pastor you can't say that look just settle down a minute don't try and grab the steering wheel of the church quietness the twin word for this it's not exactly the same if I remember correctly but it's in chapter 2 verse 2 of Timothy that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness there's a word quiet doesn't mean not saying anything it just means settled you know not turbulent steady and he's saying I want the women to learn in this sort of steady settled way not sort of jumping up and down all the time as it were peacemaking in the church rather than peace breaking and in the recipe of the church they're the ones that had enrichment rather than stirring in the recipe of the church the women add enrichment rather than stirring so that's a little

I hope a helpful thing on the quietness word let them learn in settledness and let's look at the word submission I don't think the NIV helps or at least I've got full where is it full submission in verse 11 the full is the word for all he said lots of things at all he just means you know in a really good big all encompassing way and the submission word is a word what I think could be better understood as fitting into place so what he's saying is learn just steadily peacefully and really do fit into place in the church find your God given place just fit into that rather than struggling against it rather than saying to

God no I'm not going to do that I'm not going to do that just say I want to know what you want me to do and I want to fit into that and be the woman you want me to be so the all translated here full but I think it just means in every sort of good way you can look up those later all sorts of all in what he said and the fitting into place bit now let's just focus a little bit on the fitting into place Adam was formed first he says and then Eve and he's not saying this is he is going back to the created order he's saying this is the way these tetris blocks were made to fit together Adam was first formed now I know this is capable of being caricatured and I know you can oversimplify it but I need to say something don't I let's put it this way

Adam is first formed he is given the task and the vision to head up humanity and to fill the earth and subdue it and to demonstrate God's loving care into the world and the task is given first of all to him and then you think poor bloke he's never going to do this he'll never manage this God's given him this huge task he can't do this I mean for a start he can't have any babies all by himself can he can't fill the earth and subdue it so he needs a helper poor guy it's not good for the man to be alone and that's the role into which the woman steps and he says wow fantastic I'm not alone anymore and this is the way those original Tetris box fit together and Paul says that's the way it is that's I mean there's all sort of variations on it it's not an inflexible thing but that is the fundamental way these Tetris box fit together he has the task and the vision and she is the helper without which he is helpless and incapable poor guy so they need this team is needed but he is the leader he is not the doesn't dominate but there is such a thing as leading in a gracious way and in a kind way and in a loving way which is what the Lord Jesus does and that's the way the man is to be and she is the helper she is not the head but she is absolutely irreplaceable as the helper and so here is this fitting into place it's always difficult to define and there are permutations but the fundamental situation is here Adam was first formed then Eve she is the supporter the nurturer if you haven't noticed this women can see what men can't see women notice things that men don't notice women understand things that men don't understand and women can say things that men can't say she is absolutely irreplaceable absolutely invaluable but in her right place and let's bring this to what he says here [49 : 51] I don't allow a woman to teach or have authority over a man and I think he's paralleling those things I don't allow a woman in the church to have a teaching role when he says teaching he doesn't mean just passing on information he means teaching pretty much like preaching where the person at the front if it's what God says says this guy is what God says you got to do it in colloquial English put it in your pipe and smoke it I don't know whether people say that nowadays but it means even if you don't like it this is what God says you have got to take this on board that's what this sort of teaching is and that's why he's saying I don't want women standing at the front saying to the men you got to do this put this in your pipe and smoke it that's!

not the way the family culture and we do need to this is a bit more subtle this is something you discuss it works out differently in different cultures different situations but he's saying here's forbidding something he says I don't want women teaching with authority from the front I don't want people women but leading a discussion Bible study I think my judgment on this that's different that is not saying to the people in the discussion Bible do it I think it's more like helping a discussion we can talk about that this evening personally I would say that women are very capable of leading a

discussion Bible study being an elder an elder role we don't usually press this button but it is there in the Bible is an authority role and it is not in my judgment and

I think in the text here it is not appropriate for a woman to be an elder having that authority being a deacon in my understanding of it and generally speaking in our church's understanding of it is not an authority role so much as a servant role therefore we do have women deacons and back in the old days I'm just looking around for wearing hats so back in the old days we've got two actually got somebody at the back wearing a hat was a all the old women when I came to the church there were older women they all wore hats and I think it was a cultural thing that women just wore hats in I think in Bible times wearing a hat was a sign of authority was a sign that you were under authority that you were being this is my husband and I wear a hat to show that

I'm being respectable I don't think hats work like that these days and I can tell you I talked to Stuart McNary ex Holland Road about this from Northern Ireland and I said do you think the Bible tells us that women should wear hats he says Phil I've been in churches where the women all wear hats as a sign of submission and when they get home and talk to their husbands you could see is complete nonsense and so we've got a thing here haven't we if you just focus on the external bit you miss what's really going on and so let's go for what's really going on is talking about the way women fit into the church family and the way they fit in at home respecting their husband wearing a hat doesn't make you automatically respect your husband does it you can respect your husband without necessarily wearing a hat and I'm going to say marriages work in different ways different couples!

picture is as I described now let's just take it a little bit further I'm going to he says why don't I allow a woman to teach number one that that's not the way round it should be and number two Adam was not deceived it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner he is saying Eve sinned and fell in a different way to Adam Adam just disobeyed he did plainly what he was told not to do Adam but Eve was beguiled and it says that also in 2 Corinthians which we're going to look at in a moment I mean men can be beguiled but the particular thing that he's pointing out that there's and I think he's saying that this is a particular temptation that women are prone to in a way that men are prone to other temptations but women are prone to this she was beguiled she was deceived now why was she deceived was it because she was less suspicious was it because she was more tender hearted was it because she was less objective were the women

[55 : 22] I mean let's sort of bring it over into Ephesus these women who are giving saying to the false teachers come round and have a cup of coffee really like to hear what you have to say the women who are giving a home to the false teachers is this because they tend to give weight to their heart strings rather than hard common sense a man would be a little bit more hard common sense about it he looks hungry and he's been teaching all over the place come on we'll give him is it because women are more attuned to the charm of the speaker than the content of his doctrine is that the way that the sort I don't know it just but he's saying that there's something going on here which means that I don't want the women standing up and telling the guys what's what here's the two Corinthians I'm afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning your minds may be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to

Christ so he says here's my second reason first reason Adam was formed first second reason Eve was prone to deception and I don't it's not right for the women to be standing up and telling the guys what's what here's the summary then Paul was addressing particular issues in Ephesus false teaching was there that rejected God and his created order this got into some of the women who was I'm saying this that they super spiritual and deliberately rejected the idea of getting married and having children and he says don't deliberately reject that whole idea they rejected the idea of being humble helpers and wanted to use their sexual power to take over the role of men or reject the value of men's roles as regards family life and in the life of the church and Paul says to the men men you need to step up you need not to leave a gap that these women are sort of sucked into take responsibility be praying lead in prayer it is your job to be husbands it is your job to provide it is your job to be fathers it is your job to be spiritual leaders don't say it's not my job women be women for God whether you're single or married however you became or are single embrace what God has called you to and be beautiful for God having faith and love with good thinking that's how we're saved that's the road to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ who died for our sins that's how we are saved and that's how the church and our church I hope becomes a foretaste of heaven Amen thanks Mark thanks Mark