

## **Preparation for Session 15 – The Role of Women in the Church**

Read I Timothy 2:7 – 12. Then read the entire second chapter of I Timothy. Many believe this is the key passage of scripture in the Bible regarding the role of women in the church. Consider the following questions.

1. As noted above, many believe this is the key passage of scripture in the Bible regarding the role of women in the church (entire books have been written on these few verses). Why is this passage considered to be so critical for determining the proper New Testament roles for women in the church?
2. Many modern commentators have suggested that Paul was demeaning to women and based that suggestion upon this passage alone. Can you identify a message or messages in this passage to suggest that Paul looks down on women?
3. Is I Timothy 2:8 – 12 referring only to worship services or all public assemblies of the church where men and women are gathered together?
4. Who do you think is teaching false doctrine in the Ephesian church (see I Timothy 1:3 – 8)? Do you think the teaching of false doctrine is a factor in Paul's injunctions against women in I Timothy 2?
5. Is Paul speaking his own views ("I urge", "I want") or is he speaking about general truths?
6. Can you think of a passage in I Timothy where Paul gives his own views and virtually everyone agrees that these are meant to be his own views?

7. Once again, the Greek words *aner* and *gyne* are used in this passage. Is Paul referring to husbands and wives or men and women?
8. What is the meaning of the word translated “modesty” in 2:9?
9. The same Greek word is translated “silent” in 2:12 and “quietness” in 2:11. How does this influence your interpretation of this passage?
10. What do you think Paul means by “authority” in 2:12? Of interest, Paul does not employ the usual word *exousia* for authority which is used in most other New Testament passages, such as Matthew 7:29 and Luke 7:8.
11. If a man is in charge of a Bible class and he asks a woman to teach that class, does she then gain authority over that man?
12. Do you think Paul is referring to a specific heresy in this passage? If so, why? If not, why not?
13. Why does Paul call the men (husbands) to lift holy hands in prayer? Is Paul suggesting that they pray rather than do something else? If so, what? Is Paul simply encouraging and instructing them in how they should pray?
14. Is it possible for Christians who believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God to disagree as to the interpretation of this passage?