

Saved in Childbearing, if...

"I Will Therefore That Men..."

"In Like Manner Also, That Women..."

"I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;

But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.

Let the women learn in silence with all subjection.

But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.

For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety" (I Tim. 2:8-15).

I Timothy 2:15 — "Saved in childbearing" — holds the dubious distinction of having about as many different interpretations as the number of expositors attempting to relate what they might think is meant by the verse.

BUT, one thing most attempting to explain this verse seem to have in common *is the little attention given to that which has been previously stated, leading into the thought of salvation connected with childbearing.*

And, *IF attention is given to the context*, the whole matter stated in verse fifteen really becomes self-explanatory, with the opposite of that being equally true as well.

APART from the context, one can ONLY wander about in a sea of misinterpretation.

BUT, something else may emanate from understanding verse fifteen in the light of the context as well. A person may very well run across some things that he might have preferred to stay away from, something which would be true particularly in instances where commands in the previous verses *are NOT being followed* (something, in reality, occurring throughout Christendom today, in fundamental and liberal circles alike).

So, with that in mind, let's begin with the commands in verses eight through ten, which, in turn, to properly understand, will necessitate going back to the beginning of the chapter.

But this will also necessitate first looking at the Greek words for both "man" and "woman." Two different words are used for "man," and one for "woman."

Anthropos, Aner, Gune

Anthropos and *aner* are the two main words used for "man" in the Greek New Testament, and both are used hundreds of times. And any difference between the two is minute, *EXCEPT in ONE realm*.

Anthropos is normally used when the text or context necessitates a *generic sense* — *i.e., mankind, referring to both men and women*.

And *aner* is used when a *distinction is being shown between men and women*.

Both words are used in these respects in I Timothy chapter two (vv. 1, 4, 5, 8, 12) which, as will become evident, helps to clarify certain things in this chapter.

Then, *gune* is the word used for "woman" throughout *NOT ONLY* this chapter (vv. 9-12, 14) *BUT* the New Testament as a whole. And, though the word is often translated "wife" in the New Testament (*e.g.*, I Tim. 3:2, 12), that's done from

a textual or contextual standpoint, *NOT* from the meaning of the word.

Gune itself simply means "woman," used over two hundred times in the New Testament, for both married and unmarried women. The marriage relationship *does NOT* enter into and *has NOTHING* to do with the meaning of the word.

And, aside from a different word used five times (*thelus*, translated both "woman" and "female" [Matt. 19:4; Mark 10:6; Rom. 1:26, 27; Gal. 3:28]) and two derivatives from *gune*, used one time each, (*gunaikarion* [II Tim. 3:6] and *gunaikaios* [I Peter 3:7]), *gune is the ONLY word used in the New Testament for "woman."*

The Commands in Verses Eight through Ten

To properly understand the commands in these three verses, remaining with the separation between male and female that is seen, one needs to begin back in verse one and note the use of "man" three times in the opening five verses (vv. 1, 4, 5). The word used in the Greek text in these verses is *anthropos*, and it is used in a generic respect (something evident from both the text and context), with the word including both men and women.

BUT, in verses eight and twelve, the Greek word translated "men" in English versions is *aner*, not *anthropos* as used in the previous verses. And this of course is because a distinction between men and women *is NOW in view* (something which can be seen in the context as well).

And it is evident from the continuing verses, leading into and including chapter three, that commands governing Christians in an assembly (both men and women together) are being given. These commands cover material in verses eight through twelve, with the reason for the commands given in verses thirteen and fourteen.

THEN, the section closes in verse fifteen with the thought of a woman being saved through childbearing, with an “IF” involved.

In verses eight through ten, *TWO things are brought to light*.

MEN are the ones to pray in the assembly (v. 8), with *the WOMEN* exercising care in the way that they dress and present themselves (vv. 9, 10). And the reason for *MEN* being singled out as the ones to pray in the assembly is given later in this section.

The Commands in Verses Eleven and Twelve

In verses eleven and twelve, women are prohibited from teaching in the assembly, with the reason about to be given in verses thirteen and fourteen (which is *the SAME reason* that it’s the men, *NOT* the women, who are to pray in the assembly back in v. 8).

The woman, relative to teaching in an assembly where both men and women are present, *is to be SILENT* (v. 12).

IF ONLY women are present — that is, a woman teaching women, apart from a man being present — the problem *WOULDN’T* present itself. *BUT*, where both men and women are present, with a woman teaching, *a MAJOR problem arises*; and, according to I Cor. 14:34, 35, it would be a “shame” for a woman to speak in such an instance, which, comparing passages, would be with both men and women present.

And this is because of that which would be involved in her doing so (*cf.* I Cor. 11:5; 14:34, 35, showing a distinction between within and without the assembly).

With that in mind, note the reason which Scripture provides for the preceding, with Scripture then elevating the woman to *a place and position far ABOVE the one which she would occupy by stepping DOWN from that position into the pulpit*.

The Reason in Verses Thirteen and Fourteen

The reason for the God-ordained distinction between the roles men and women are to occupy in the assembly when spiritual matters are involved — praying, handling the Word — *is clearly outlined in verses thirteen and fourteen. It has to do with ONE thing, with HEADSHIP.*

HEADSHIP belongs to “the man.” That is seen in the order of creation (Adam first formed, then Eve [v. 13]), and *headship* is seen being both *violated by Eve* and *exercised by Adam* in the fall (through Eve’s act, then through Adam’s subsequent act [v. 14]).

Little to no comment would be necessary on the first part of the preceding (v. 13, *man formed first*), for that is simply how the record reads in the opening two chapters of Genesis.

But the fall in chapter three, where redemption as well is dealt with, is a little bit different.

Eve, through her actions (*acting on her own in relation to the Word, apart from Adam*, following Satan’s deception wrought through the serpent [Gk., she was “utterly deceived,” more literal rendering]) *violated the role of headship held by Adam*. And this, of course, brought about the fall.

Adam, *NOT deceived*, was left with *NO choice other than to ALSO partake of the fruit, acting in a redemptive capacity, evidently knowing full-well the ramifications of his EITHER acting OR NOT acting in this manner.*

(The whole of the matter can be clearly seen and understood by viewing the type and antitype together.

The first man, the first Adam, found his bride [a part of his very being] in a fallen state, no longer in a position to eat of the tree of life and ascend the throne with him. Thus, he did *the ONLY thing possible IF man was to ever realize the purpose for his creation.*

Adam partook of sin, with a view to redemption at a future time, allowing him to one day ascend the throne as a *COMPLETE being* [which would necessitate Eve occupying the throne with him].

Drawing from the type, note the antitype:

Christ, the second Man, the last Adam, found His bride in a fallen state and became sin to effect her redemption [II Cor. 5:21]; and this, of course, was with a view to God's Son one day ascending the throne as a *COMPLETE being* [which would necessitate His redeemed bride, a part of His very being, occupying the throne with Him].

For additional information on the preceding, refer to Ch. I, "Adam and Eve," in the author's book, *The Bride in Genesis.*)

Thus, for reasons given in verses thirteen and fourteen, *women are forbidden to speak in an assembly, handling the Word, where men are present.*

And, SOLELY from a Scriptural standpoint, there are NO circumstances which would allow her to speak in this manner.

To do so, a woman could ONLY be taking it upon herself, as Eve in the fall, to exercise HEADSHIP. And doing such is CLEARLY forbidden in NO uncertain terms in the Word.

Notwithstanding...

But, does the prohibition placed on the woman in the previous manner leave her in some type inferior position?

HARDLY! The man occupies his UNIQUE place and the woman her UNIQUE place. And one CANNOT, under any circumstances, take the place of the other, though many have tried.

The place of the man, as seen, has to do with HEADSHIP. BUT, note the place which the woman occupies under the man's headship, which, in reality, for her, is EQUALLY as HIGH as the position which he occupies.

"Childbearing [articular in the Gk. text, providing definiteness, emphasis]," a bearer of children, is used to single out the central place which the woman is to occupy, though it could NOT be childbearing per se, for that would be out of line with the overall subject (also note that numerous women CANNOT bear children, do NOT marry, etc.).

Rather, childbearing in the text can ONLY be used to take matters to the heart of a woman's calling (cf. Gen. 3:16; I Tim. 5:14, 15), allowing the salvation in view to include ALL women — whether actually bearing or not bearing children.

And the salvation, of course, could NOT be salvation by grace, presently possessed by Christians (which would evidently include the women in view in the text). Rather, this salvation — a future salvation, the salvation of one's soul — has to do with remaining within the framework of a woman's calling (v. 15a), while exhibiting "faith and charity ['love'] and holiness with sobriety ['good sense,' 'self-control']" (v. 15b).

Thus, note that women are to realize this future salvation, the salvation of their souls, through remaining within their God-given roles, seen in the first part of the verse, and exhibiting the qualities seen in the latter part of the verse.

And men would realize this same salvation in like manner — remaining in their respective roles and exhibiting the same qualities seen in the latter part of this verse as well.

For either the man or the woman to leave their God-given role and attempt to function in the role occupied by the other would NOT ONLY result in disobedience to the clear commands of the Word BUT this would be a move OUTSIDE the realm in which their salvation is to be effected.

For the man, it would be a step DOWN and AWAY from his high calling and the headship which he is to occupy; and for the woman, it would be a step DOWN and AWAY from her high calling as well, into some semblance of headship which she has NOT been called to occupy.

AGAIN, note how the text reads:

“Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, IF...”

THEN, to conclude and further explain:

(One thing in v. 15, in connection with and concluding the preceding six verses [vv. 9-14], needs clarification.

“Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety” [v. 15].

Note that the word “she” in the first part of the verse is singular; and the word “childbearing,” though singular in construction [Gk. text], is a somewhat generic type word [child, or children]. Then, note the plural pronoun, “they,” continuing the verse.

What does this plural pronoun refer back to?

What is the antecedent of the pronoun?

The antecedent *CAN'T* be “she,” singled out by itself, for a pronoun *MUST* agree with its antecedent in number — singular with singular, plural with plural. And here we would have a plural pronoun with a singular antecedent.

The pronoun *COULD* be seen agreeing in number with “childbearing,” *IF* this word is understood in a plural sense, making “childbearing” the antecedent of the pronoun.

And some expositors have done this, seeing the complete passage on women [vv. 9-15] being summed up by reference to a literal bearing and rearing of children, with a woman realizing the salvation in view through a proper rearing of her child/children.

But, an interpretation of this nature departs from the overall subject of the passage, which has to do with the place which the woman is to occupy under the man, along with her conduct while occupying this place.

"Childbearing," remaining with the subject at hand, as previously stated [p. 6], takes a woman to the heart of her calling and, when taken in its overall scope, sums up the subject of the whole passage [which, when understood in a literal respect, does away with the preceding].

[Also, note another problem, previously dealt with to an extent on p. 6. *ALL women* don't bear or haven't borne children (young women preceding childbearing age, women who never marry, married women who never, or can't, have children). Women of this nature [a large segment of society] would be excluded from the salvation in view *IF* the antecedent of the pronoun in v. 15 is "childbearing," with the word understood in a literal sense.

But, for *ALL women*, regardless of whether they do or don't have children, "childbearing" would lie at the heart of their calling, as it is seen in this overall passage. Having or not having children *could NOT change this, allowing ALL women to be included in the salvation in view.*]

With a proper, contextual interpretation — viewing the complete passage [vv. 9-15] — *the antecedent of the pronoun in v. 15 becomes evident.*

Verses 9-11 refer to "women" [plural]; then the continuing verses use the singular form, or a singular name or pronoun ["woman" (v. 12), "Eve," "woman" (vv. 13, 14), and "she" (v. 15)].

However, note something about how the first singular use of "woman" in the complete passage is used:

"But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence" [v. 12].

A particular woman, separate from other women, is NOT in view, though the singular is used. Rather, ALL women are in view [e.g., "Man's Day," referencing ALL men]. And a person will find EXACTLY the same thing relative to the singular

form used to reference “women” through the remaining three verses, including the two references to “Eve” [vv. 13, 14].

After all, Eve, immediately following the fall, is referred to as “the mother of all living” [Gen. 3:20]. And every woman since that time holds her place in life [subjection to the man, certain restrictions regarding the Word, pain in childbirth, etc.] because of Eve’s act, necessitating Adam’s act [with the fall occurring through the man’s act, exercising headship (in this case, of the human race)].

With the preceding in mind, it should be a simple matter to see why a plural pronoun, rather than singular, is used to conclude the passage in v. 15. Though singular forms referencing “women” are used in vv. 12-15, as previously seen, *ALL* of the singular forms are, in a larger respect, references to “women,” *NOT* references to a single “woman,” *NOT* even the reference to “Eve.”

Thus, the plural pronoun ending the passage is in perfect keeping with all that has preceded in vv. 9-15 — “women”[plural], *NOT* a single “woman,” throughout the latter part of the overall passage.

The antecedent of the plural pronoun concluding the passage is simply *the whole of the references to women in the passage — a group acting as individuals, requiring a plural pronoun referring back to them at the end of the discourse, in v. 15.*