

Pastoral Epistles - No. 7

I TIMOTHY 2: 8-15

Men Must Pray (Verse 8)

Having established his apostolic authority, Paul calls the males to pray everywhere, and never give up (see Luke 18: 1). He returns to the generic "prayers" (expressing dependence, as in verse 1). Men express their relationship to God by lifting up undefiled hands (see Nehemiah 8: 6; Psalm 24: 4; Hebrews 12: 12) without doubt, hesitation or violent emotion.

Women Must Pray, but First (Verses 9-10)

"In like manner" is used six times in the pastoral epistles, usually to apply the same teaching to both men and women (e.g. I Timothy 3: 8 & 11; Titus 2: 3 & 6). Both are to pray constantly (see I Thessalonians 5: 16-22). But as with the men (verse 8), something is required of the women first, viz. modest dress (whence "cosmetics") and demeanour, self-control (see more detail in I Peter 3: 1-4), not with elaborate hair styles, gold, jewellery or rich clothing. Their testimony to godliness is seen in good works rather than in style (see Acts 9: 31).

Paul's Biblical Basis for this Distinction (Verses 11-15)

Our Lord Jesus Christ has freed the women from the restrictions of Old Testament times, and Paul found it necessary to say what the limits to this freedom are. Women are to accept the place of the student in relation to the teacher. Note that men are to be sober also (see I Peter 5: 5), though Paul does not say so here. Teaching is an authoritative act, and normally the part of some few of the men (see I Corinthians 14: 26-35; James 3: 1). Paul refers this to the order and manner of creation of Adam and Eve (see Genesis 2: 7, 21-22). Satan deceived Eve (see John 8: 44), and she blindly disobeyed God, leading Adam to disobey also, but wilfully. Paul understood the account of the Fall literally, and so also should we. Believing, loving, godly, self-controlled women have their opportunities in the place of greatest usefulness, viz. home, family and children.