



Men and women in 1 Timothy

Paul's positive vision

1 Timothy 3:15 ... that you may know how one must conduct oneself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.

Not a positive vision in our Western progressive world

A very brief history of the interpretation of 1 Timothy 2 (esp. v. 12)

1 Timothy 2:12 I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet.



Traditional view (e.g., Origen, Chrysostom, Luther, Calvin, Matthew Henry, Matthew Poole):

1. Paul is not forbidding women from teaching in every conceivable context (these interpreters highlight Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, Mary, Anna, and Philip's daughters)
2. Paul is describing the core activity of the ordinary teaching office in gathered worship
3. This is an authoritative activity and so naturally leads on to forbidding women having or usurping more general kinds of authority

Modern critical (i.e., non-evangelical) scholarship:

Largely agrees with traditional view of what the words mean, but usually denies it is authoritative for us.

More recent evangelical revision type 1:

"to teach" is referring to an inherently negative activity, e.g., "teaching the heresy" or "teaching in a bossy way" (so does not apply to us).

More recent evangelical revision type 2:

"To teach" involves passing on authoritative oral traditions (so does not apply to us directly).

The positive challenge for men to be responsible household leaders (1 Timothy 3:1-13)

1 Timothy 3:4-5 [The overseer] must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, ⁵ for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?

How to preach this?

How can we implement it well in church life?

The positive challenge for women in the household (1 Timothy 5:3-16)

Verse 3: The key principle: honour those who are truly widows

Verses 4-8: Widows with natural children should be provided for by these children

Verses 9-10 [there are] Principles for "enrolling" certain older widows



Verses 11–13: Refuse to enrol younger women as “widows”

Verses 14–16: Affirm natural household life for younger women

How to preach this well?

How to implement it well in church life



Order in the household and restrictions on teaching (1 Tim 2:8-15)

Context and thrust of the passage

1 Timothy 2:8-10

1 Timothy 2:11-12

1 Timothy 2:13-15

How to preach this well?

How to implement it well in church life?



References: 1 Timothy 5:3-16

Video

“Widows in the household of God”
<https://paa.moore.edu.au/resources/widows-in-the-household-of-god/>

Key articles on the scholarship

John M. G. Barclay, “Household Networks and Early Christian Economics: A Fresh Study of 1 Timothy 5:3-16,” *New Testament Studies* 66.2 (2020): 268-87.

Lyn M. Kidson, “Real Widows, Young Widows and the Limits of Benefaction in 1 Timothy 5:3-16,” *Australian Biblical Review* 70 (2022): 83-100.

Bruce W. Winter, “Providentia for the Widows of 1 Timothy 5:3-16,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 39.1 (1988).



References: 1 Timothy 2:8-15

Video (referring to key resources):

Key questions in scholarship on 1 Timothy 2:8-15:

www.lionelwindsor.net/2023/05/04/key-issues-1-timothy-2/

Also (longer!): Winger, Mike. An 11-and-a-half hour video from 23 November 2023: “ALL The Debates Over 1 Tim 2:11-15: Women in Ministry part 12 (it took me a year to make this)”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GvLqRpGCayA>

Forthcoming:

My (very long!) chapter which will be appearing next year in the book *Women in the Church* (4th edition) about the meaning of the word “to teach” in 1 Timothy 2:12, engaging with the multitude of views in scholarship.

Recommended popular level book:

Claire Smith, *God's Good Design: What the Bible Really Says about Men and Women*, 2nd ed. (Matthias Media, 2019).