



# First Timothy

# Let's Worship

**Men and Women in Worship**

**I Timothy 2:8-15**

**Lesson Nine**



# First Timothy

## A Study of the First Letter of the Apostle Paul to His Son in the Faith

### Let's Worship

We have two very interesting instructions from the Apostle Paul today. First, he is urging people to pray. But his encouragement to pray has some qualifications. Read I Timothy 2:8.

There was a common practice among the Jews that when they prayed, they stood and held their hands up, palms toward the sky. This was typical, see Luke 18:11 where the Pharisee stands up to pray. Paul says that Timothy and the people at Ephesus should, when they pray, be sure that they pray in the right attitude.

First, he says that when they lift up their hands, those hands should be clean...holy hands.

Think of the twenty-fourth Psalm where we are told that if you go up to the Lord, you should have "clean hands and a pure heart." This is not to say that a person must be perfect before they can pray. What we believe it means is that the person who prays should take prayer very seriously. That is, we don't pray with the thought in our mind that after we pray we can behave just any way we want. God expects those who pray to do it from a heart that is totally committed to Him, with the intent to be a good Christian when the prayer is done.

Second, a person who prays should not be holding on to anger. Jesus said quite a bit about praying with anger in your heart. He spoke of going to someone you were angry with and saying "I'm sorry," or, on the other hand, forgiving the person who hurt you, before you communicate with God. See Matthew 5:23, 24; 6:15; 18:35.

Third, people who pray shouldn't always be looking for an argument. Paul said if you are the "disputing" kind don't bother to go to God, because He's just not going to hear you. Maybe we could say, "God doesn't like testy people; He likes humble people."

Now we come to Paul's discussion about women and worship. We are about to discuss one of the most argued Scriptures in the Bible. The writer of these lessons has chosen not to visit the many theories of how these verses can be interpreted, instead, we will look at the most common view taken by students of the Bible. Paul continues his presentation to the church at Ephesus on worship. Read I Timothy 2:9-15.

First, we must understand that Paul was writing to a very specific group of people and we must also consider the world in which he was writing. The place of women in the Jewish culture was nothing more than something (someone) to be owned. Wives were the property of their husbands. For instance, women were not to learn the Law, or the first five books of the Old Testament. In the Synagogue they could not sit with the men. Women were not to teach the Bible to anyone, even to children. You may remember that the woman at the well (story in John 4) is amazed that Jesus would speak to her, a Samaritan *woman*.

In the Greek culture, there was little difference. In the Greek religions, women were no more important than they were in Jewish religion. In Ephesus, the Temple of Diana had hundreds of "priestesses" whose only job was to please men. In the home women were in no better position than in the Jewish home. Women could not go out of the house alone. They could not speak to



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men without their husbands present and many other limitations.

So Paul was writing to women in the middle of that culture...that way of living. He spoke of how the women dressed, wore their hair and the kind of jewelry they wore. You ask, “What difference did that make?” In Ephesus, among Jewish people it made a lot of difference.

First he didn't want women's minds to be on the wrong thing. Would they try to dress better or more stylishly than other women in the church? That could become a distracting contest of fashion, so that their mind was on something less than God when they came to church.

Second, if they got into outrageous hair styles, or immodest (revealing) clothing, or piled on the jewelry, they could have been seen as imitating the priestesses of the Temple of Diana whose piled up hair was also fixed in braids, and who dressed to attract men. Paul pled for modesty, not suggestiveness. This was not about wearing fashionable clothes, makeup, styled hair or even some jewelry, so long as it was in good taste.

Third, Paul wanted the women of the church to pay more attention to their inner beauty than the outside. He went on to say that women should learn in quietness and submission. Again, this reflects the way of living in that day, and encouraged women not to interrupt and be loud in worship which would distract others. The inner beauty of women comes out, Paul says, as women do good things in Jesus' name. (See Acts 9:36)

Paul followed one of his normal routines and referred to the Old Testament to support what he was saying here. He called attention to the fall of humanity and the entrance of sin into the world. (See Genesis 3) Basically, what we can see in 2:14 is that Paul saw the situation in the Garden of Eden as showing Eve moving out of her place as second in God's creation. So, we can assume that Paul is encouraging women to remain in the role God had planned for them, following the lead of men, and by that, show their loyalty to God.

We must not ever see this as making women second class. Paul says in Galatians 3:28 that there is no difference in God's eyes as far as salvation is concerned. And we have many, many references in the Bible about women who God has used in amazing ways.

The final statement is about women being saved through childbearing. This is probably one of the most difficult verses in the Bible to understand and interpret. In summary, it could mean that if women honor their God-given role, they will please Him. It can mean that a woman, Mary, was the mother of Jesus, and through His birth, we are all saved...including women.

\*Underlined words and phrases are to be used in completing the Student Worksheet.

**Lesson Goal:** To give students awareness of God's instructions for worship.

**Scripture Memory:** “I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer , without anger or disputing.” | Timothy 2:8

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## Student Worksheet—Following Through

### Let's Worship

>What three things does Paul say are important when a person prays?

1.

2.

3.

>The place of \_\_\_\_\_ in the Jewish culture was nothing more than something (someone) to be \_\_\_\_\_.

>What three things did Paul suggest for women which would demonstrate their inner beauty?

1.

2.

3.

>So, we can assume that Paul is encouraging \_\_\_\_\_ to remain in the role God had planned for them, following the lead of \_\_\_\_\_, and by that, show their loyalty to \_\_\_\_\_.

**For Memory: “I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer , without anger or disputing.” | Timothy 2:8**

#### **How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:**

First, believe that the God of the Bible is the true God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God's Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus' name. Jesus' death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.