

**1 Timothy**  
**B.) The Church and its members**  
**2. 2:8-15 Propriety of women**  
**2:8-10**  
**“Dressed for prayer”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 8 The heart of the man who prays**

**III. Vs. 9-10 The heart of the woman who prays**

**I. Introduction**

There are times when studying the New Testament that you really wish you could call on the writer to do a little Q and A as to just what he was thinking about. But that’s just not possible as we approach this passage which is one of the more disputed verses in the entire bible. Of utmost importance is the **context** of this passage we are about to study: Paul is writing to Timothy about the proper order of the worship service and he has said that it involves three things, PRAYER, PRAISE, and PROCLAMATION. Paul spent a good deal of time dealing with both the aspects and objects of prayer. Here in this section Paul touches on men’s and women’s roll within the confines of the worship service. Paul said that corporate and private prayer within the Church enables society to live peacefully and for the Christian to live wisely within the world they have been placed. He went on to say that prayer is an effective and powerful instrument for the salvation of all mankind. In fact in verse 4 the phrase “*who desire **ALL MEN** to be saved*” includes all kinds of humanity (men, women, boys and girls) without distinction. The focus of verses 8-10 is still on the subject of prayer but here Paul is writing about having an atmosphere in which prayer can be made that will cause it to be more effective. Specifically Paul addresses the

attitudes of both men in women within the Church setting and how this ought to look so as to maximize the effectiveness of prayer.

## II. Vs. 8 The heart of the man of prays

Vs. 8 First Paul says, “*I desire that the men pray everywhere...*” some have taken this out of context and have taught this to mean that when in public **ONLY** men should pray but that is not what Paul is saying. Instead what he is saying is **WHEN** men pray in public they should do so in a **threefold way**. It is clear that Paul’s concern is not **WHO** prays but rather **HOW** they pray. Paul writes of **three essentials for effective prayer for men, UPWARD, OUTWARD and INWARD:**

1. **UPWARD: Holy hands:** This is characteristic of a Jewish synagogue where men prayed while standing with their arms lifted up. **This was an outward posture that symbolized an inward heart; the hands were opened, facing out and up and in so doing they were saying in prayer to God that “I’m letting go, I have nothing to hide and I’m keeping nothing back in my communication with you.”** Interesting that we read Paul’s admonishment of the position of our hands and head in prayer and it is **not** folded hands and head bowed, yet we have taught our children to do this. The reason I suspect is that **a child with hands together and head bowed and their eyes closed is a child that will not get into too much trouble**. But now that we are adults we can entertain the idea that there is far more liberty in our physical position in prayer. We can walk and pray, drive a car and pray, lie down with are face to the ground and pray as **it’s not the position of the body that matters it’s the position of the heart**. Holy hands speak of a set apart life where we are no longer practicing sin,

Psalm 66:18 reminds us that if we regard sin in our heart, the Lord will not hear our prayer.

2. **OUTWARD: Without wrath**: The first essential was upward as men needed to check their heart before God. This next essential deals with an outward behavior and requires us to live without anger towards our fellow man. When we approach God we need to first deal with our hearts before those whom we have held a grudge or resentment towards before we go before the Lord in prayer.
3. **INWARD: “Without” doubting**: This last essential deals with an inward aspect of our heart as we must have trust and not be in dispute with God about the request or the outcome. *It is clear that what Paul is saying is that when men pray in public they needed to be doing so in a way that is consistent with their private life, towards God and towards their fellow man. Paul didn't care about making the prayer pretty to the ears of their fellow man but he wanted them to be aware that what they were saying publically to God had better be true to what is in their own hearts!* I believe that Paul nails public prayer for men, as the issues he raises here for men really haven't changed as we often battle wanting to be seen by others as open to God when in reality we want to control God and we want to be seen as spiritual but in reality we are not what our prayer is to others.

### **III. Vs. 9-10 The heart of the woman who prays**

We live in a day of the equality of women, the thought that men and women can do everything the other can but as popular is that notion is, physically it just isn't true on both sides. The fact remains that men and women are created differently, not better and worst but different and together they make a perfect pair. So on the place of women and

men in the local church Paul write down God's heart. First he deals the artificial beauty of this world where women are valued primarily upon their appearance contrasted against the true beauty of women which is based upon the character of her heart. The truth is that women whose value is rated upon the artificial and temporary attraction of the externals will garner attention but in the end it will be at the expense of lasting affection and security. The inward beauty of a gentle and quiet heart may not attract the temporary attention but it will win lasting affection and security.

- a. Vs. 9 The phrase "*in like manner also, that the women...*" is a phrase that means "*in like manner to men, women are to **pray***" and again this is an indication of the public involvement of women in the early church service. Taking this passage alongside Paul's first letter to the Corinthians in chapter 11 he writes, "*every woman who prays or prophesies...*" it is clear that he intended women to pray and expound scripture but that they need to do so demonstrating agreement with the principle of headship established in the body of Christ which is what was meant by "*head covering*" in that passage. Paul goes on to deal with **HOW** they are to be mindful of a few attitudes of the heart. He wants to make sure that like the men their public prayer is not a mere outward show for others to see. And just like the above instruction with men one deals with outward and the other inward: That "*the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with **propriety** and **moderation**, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing*".
- **Propriety asks:** "*Is it appropriate for the occasion? Is it over-dressed or under-dressed? Is it going to call inappropriate attention to myself?*"

- **Moderation asks:** *“Is it moderate? Is it just too much – or far too little?”*

Moderation looks for a middle ground.

Paul was not trying to regulate women’s fashion; what he is trying to establish is the attitude behind the way some women came to public prayer which was demonstrating that they were far more interested in being seen by others than being seen by God. It is interesting that the word “*modest*” means “*decent and orderly*” and is where we get our English word “**cosmetic**” from. I am in no way suggesting that women should not wear makeup, only that they should avoid the extremes so as not to draw attention away from the Lord either positive or negative. Ephesus was a wealthy and commercial community and it seems as though some women were competing for attention and popularity. *“The fanciest clothing and expensive hairdo’s are no substitution to a godly character and good works”*, Paul says! **Remember ladies, glamor and glitz can be applied from the outside but the true beauty of godliness can only come from the inside!** Phyllis Diller once said that, *“She would spend three hours a day in the beauty shop....and that was just for the estimate of what work needed to be done.”* Just because someone dress down doesn’t mean that they aren’t trying to attract attention as some churches have emphasized that women wear their hair in a bun with a cover put on no makeup and generally try to look as plain as they can. But that in its self is trying to be noticed for being spiritual. It is not what is on the outside that God is impressed with but rather what is on the inside.

- b. *“Which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works”*: Instead of the outward preparation for prayer just like the men, women needed to be focused

on the inward heart. All this will be seen in her talk matching her walk as she will be not just talking but noted for doing “*good works*”. We have some truly beautiful and outstanding women in this fellowship who have what Peter described in 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:4 as an “*adornment of the hidden person of the heart, ... the incorruptible beauty of a gentile and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.*” ***In other wards their outward beauty is only succeed by their inward beauty towards the Lord!***