

Lesson 7 – TO WORSHIP THE LORD

1 Timothy 2:8-10

(1 Tim. 2:8) – This verse goes with the verses before on prayer, especially public prayer in our worship services – **“I will therefore that men pray every where.”** True believers are to be diligent in prayer for one another and for all sorts of people. Paul wrote to the believers in Thessalonica to “pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you” (1 Thess. 5:17-18). This does not mean that we are always to be on our knees in the exercise of prayer, but that we should have a constant attitude of prayer and thanksgiving towards the Lord Who has saved us by His grace through the Lord Jesus Christ and Who directs our lives by His divine providence. He wrote to the believers at Phillipi, “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God” (Php. 4:6).

“Lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting” – This does not mean praying with our hands in the air. There is nothing holy about our physical hands. Holy hands indicate sincerity and purity of attitude and motive before God as believing sinners rest in and trust Christ for all salvation, righteousness, holiness, and life (Mark 11:25, 26). Physical gestures mean nothing apart from the heart made right with God (cf. Isa. 1:15-16). The point here is that the man who leads in prayer in our worship services must have holy hands. What does that mean? The hand is the symbol of the activities of life. Most of the things you do in life involve your hands. And the point is the man who leads in prayer ought to be the kind of person who is living a holy life, not that he is a perfect person, but that he is a sinner saved by grace, resting in and following Christ. So, who are the men who are to lead in prayer in public worship? Those who have clean hands. Clean hands are those washed in the blood of Christ and living a life of faith in and by Him, for His glory. Without wrath and dissension refer to the inner attitude – not anger, not dissenting against God or men. That is pure hearted with a loving heart.

(1 Tim. 2:9) – Now Paul turns to the role of believing women in the worship services of the church (cf. 1 Cor. 11:1-16). We need to understand first that when it comes to salvation by God’s grace, there is no difference between men and women as we stand in Christ, washed in His blood and clothed in His righteousness imputed (Gal. 3:26-29). Being a man or a woman does not make a person any more or less of a sinner or any more or less saved by God’s grace, or any more or less godly. In salvation by God’s grace our differences do not matter at all. We are all equally saved, righteous, forgiven, all based on Christ’s righteousness imputed to us, and we have no righteousness of our own to recommend us unto God. However, Paul had a specific word for believing women.

He now deals with how women ought to dress for worship. First, let’s be clear. One of the guiding rules of how we dress for worship, and all occasions, is this – A man is to look like a man, and woman is to look like a woman. There is no transgender; you are either male or female as God made you. To say otherwise is to rebel against God. Next,

Godly women AND men ought to keep in mind that the purpose of public worship is to draw attention to Christ and lift Him up in worship, prayer, and preaching. The problem in the church at Ephesus was women under the pretense of coming to worship God were flaunting themselves and desecrating that worship by the dress and demeanor that betrayed an evil intent rather than a heart of worship. And the worship was being polluted by women who saw it as a way to flaunt their wealth, to demonstrate their beauty, to put on a sexually attractive demonstration to men that would draw their focus away from the living God to things not fitting, certainly not fitting in a worship environment. We need to remind ourselves that God looks not on the outward appearance but on the heart (1 Sam. 16:7).

“Women adorn themselves” – Be prepared from the inside out with **“modest apparel”** means not excessive but with reserve. **“Shamefacedness”** speaks of humility in the fear of the Lord as opposed to pride and vanity. **“Sobriety”** speaks of clear thinking in knowing the purpose of our public assemblies to worship God and not flaunt our personal appearance and possessions. Therefore, there should be no EXCESSIVE arrangement of the hair or decoration of the body with jewelry so as to attract attention. All of us should dress appropriately for the occasion as we meet to worship God in Christ. Both men and women need to ask ourselves, “How would we dress if we knew that the Lord was here?” Well, the Lord IS here (Matt. 18:20). The main concern for both women and men is that we are found dressed in the robe of Christ’s righteousness imputed and not to impress one another (Matt. 6:31-34). This in no way means that both women and men should not take care of their appearance with cleanliness and nice clothes. But what we wear should be appropriate for the occasion, which is to worship the Lord God.

(2:10) – Women who profess **“godliness”** (i.e. to believe in and follow Christ) ought to be more concerned with adorning their profession with **“good works.”** These **“good works”** are not the cause or ground of salvation but the fruit and evidence of salvation. Even though we are not saved by our **“good works,”** but only by the work of Christ on Calvary, His blood and righteousness alone, our **“good works”** are important, even necessary, as they are the work of Christ in us, the fruit and evidence of His grace, and the testimony of our love to Him and His people (Eph. 2:8-10). They are fruit unto God (Rom. 7:4-6), to the praise of His glory in Christ, and fruits of righteousness (Php. 1:9-11). They are meant to be a testimony to the glory of God in Christ (Matt. 5:16). This truly **“becometh** (is fitting and appropriate for) **“women professing godliness”** (cf., 1 Pet. 3:3-4). The point of all this is that the church can be a place where worship happens, or the church can be a place devoted whole-heartedly to people putting on a show. We want it to be a place of true worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:23-24).