

Pastoral Epistles: 1 Timothy 2 — Instructions on Worship

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Session 3

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Abstract

In this lecture, Dr. Robert W. Yarbrough analyzes 1 Timothy 2, framing apostolic instructions on worship as foundational for both church order and human flourishing. He emphasizes that prayer forms the essential heart of corporate worship, creating a peaceable environment for the fruitful spread of the gospel through the sole mediator, Jesus Christ. Addressing contemporary cultural shifts and gender theory, Yarbrough defends a traditional biblical theology of male and female roles, advocating for an "ordered relational synergy" in which women are active disciples and men reject anger in worship. Ultimately, he argues that restrictions regarding pastoral oversight and congregational instruction reflect divine creation order rather than cultural limitations.

Outline

I. Introduction and Cultural Context (1 Tim 2:1–12 Context)

- A. Centrality and controversial nature of 1 Timothy 2 in modern scholarship
- B. Contrast between Biblical authority and contemporary culture
 - 1. Law and sexual ethics in 1 Timothy 1
 - 2. Authority of Scripture regarding male and female design
- C. Human flourishing and the "Ecology of Man"
 - 1. The Salzburg Declaration (European ecumenical consensus)
 - 2. Countering modern gender theory (Judith Butler)
 - 3. Necessity of fatherhood, motherhood, and divine design for societal order

II. Corporate Worship and the Centrality of Prayer (1 Tim 2:1–7)

- A. The Apostolic Imperative for Prayer (1 Tim 2:1–2)
 - 1. Multi-faceted prayer: petitions, intercessions, thanksgivings for all people
 - 2. Church as a "house of prayer" (African church tradition and Isaiah/Psalm fulfillment)
 - 3. Specific prayer for civil authorities and rulers
 - 4. Practical outcome: peaceable, quiet lives in godliness (shalom)

B. The Theological Foundation of Prayer and Salvation (1 Tim 2:3–7)

1. God's desire for the salvation of all people
2. Monotheistic truth vs. Ephesian polytheism: One God
3. Unique mediation of Christ Jesus: ransom provided at the proper time
4. Paul's divine commission: herald, apostle, and faithful teacher to the Gentiles

C. Core Pastoral Observations on Worship

1. Prayer as the engine and context for the ministry of the Word
2. Necessity of God's personal presence for the Word to be fruitful
3. God's favor toward social order to facilitate gospel advancement
4. Common grace vs. saving grace in Christ's ransom

III. Behavioral Guidelines and Attitudes in Public Worship (1 Tim 2:8–10)

A. Directives for Men (1 Tim 2:8)

1. Requirement to lift up holy hands in prayer across congregations
2. Explicit rejection of male anger, temper, road rage, and theological disputing
3. Contrast between destructive male outrage and Spirit-led prayer

B. Directives for Women (1 Tim 2:9–10)

1. Modesty, decency, and propriety in attire
2. Refusal of flashy, status-seeking display (hair, gold, pearls, costly clothes)
3. True adornment through good deeds fitting for God's worshippers
4. Addressing characteristic gender tendencies in light of divine worship

IV. Discipleship and Gender Roles in the Assembly (1 Tim 2:11–15)

A. Elevation of Women as Serious Disciples (1 Tim 2:11)

1. Translation of let a woman learn as an imperative/command to Timothy
2. Radical departure from Jewish and Greco-Roman traditions that marginalized female learning
3. Posture of learning: quietness and full submission
4. Essential role of women as active disciple-makers in a thriving church

B. Restrictions on Congregational Oversight and Teaching (1 Tim 2:12)

1. Prohibition against women teaching or exercising authority (authentein) over men
2. Relief from the specific duty of pastoral oversight and congregational instruction
3. Distinction: women permitted and encouraged to teach in other spheres (e.g., Titus 2)
4. Pastoral role defined: shepherd-teaching, spiritual oversight, vision, and defense of flock

C. Creation and Fall Foundations (1 Tim 2:13–15)

1. Creation order: Adam formed first, then Eve
2. Deception order in the Fall: Eve deceived first
3. Division of labor grounded in creation mandate and fall rather than cultural accident

4. Eschatological salvation for women (saved through childbearing) in faith, love, and holiness

V. Synthesis: Ordered Relational Synergy and Pastoral Reality

A. Concept of "Ordered Relational Synergy" vs. Modern Models

1. Critique of both modern egalitarianism and rigid/misused authority
2. Covenantal partnership between husband and wife reflecting Christ's sacrificial love
3. Vital necessity of female service and servile ministry (diakonia) in local church

B. Reality of Pastoral Ministry and Faithful Church Order

1. Pastoral ministry as humble service, protection, and sacrifice rather than self-aggrandizement
2. Normativity of apostolic church order across church history
3. Call to uphold biblical design for human flourishing and congregational holiness