

v. 1 – The logical connective *ovv* relates the material of ch. 2 with what has preceded it. Paul has just referred in 1:19 to some in the church that had rejected “keeping faith and a good conscience.”

The phrase echoes what Paul has already said in 1:3-5. He exhorts Timothy to instruct elements within the Ephesian church to desist from teaching false doctrines. According to Paul, the goal of this directive to oppose heterodoxy is to produce “love from a pure heart and a *good conscience* and a *sincere faith*” (1:5). Thus, by extension, those who reject Paul and Timothy’s stance against heterodoxy reject the truth itself. This eventuates in shipwrecked faith, and Paul cites Hymenaeus and Alexander as examples of this tragic state (1:20).

In summary, the false doctrine that was present in the Ephesian church is what occasions Paul’s instructions in Chapter 2.

v. 2 – Paul’s first remedy to the presence of heterodoxy is to call the community of faith to prayer. The assembly of the congregation for worship is in view. He urges that “entreaties, prayers, petitions, and thanksgiving” are made for everyone, then particularly for those who are leaders in government. The purpose of the prayerfulness that Paul prescribes is so that “we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.”

v. 3 – Paul further states that both the prayerfulness of the church and the resulting peace and tranquility are good in the sight of God, “who desires all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.” (v. 4) The peace and tranquility that stems from the prayerfulness of the church is not an end in itself. Paul has in view the overall witness of the church. His prescription has soul winning in view.

vv. 5-6 – The creedal formulation of Paul’s words here is striking. He is elaborating on the soteriological nature of the truth he has just mentioned in v. 4. His creedalizing probably relates to the influence of the false teachers in the congregation, who are elsewhere described as “deprived of the truth” (6:5) and professors of “what is falsely called ‘knowledge’” (6:20-21). Doubtless Paul felt the need to reiterate clearly the simple elements of the message of Christ. He undergirds the veracity of this message with an appeal to his divine appointment as a preacher, apostle, and teacher of it (2:17).

v. 8 – In light of the desirable peace it produces, and with a view toward the salvation of men (particularly leaders in government), Paul restates his desire that the church gather for prayer.

v. 8 – Paul particularizes the manner in which the men of the church ought to gather for prayer – lifting holy hands without wrath and disputing. It is likely that this also relates to the effects of the false teaching, as well as the demeanor of the false teachers themselves. In 6:4, they are described as both conceited and having a morbid interest in controversy. The falsity they peddled had also given rise to “envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions, and constant friction” within the congregation. All of these negative characteristics are wholly inconsistent with the quiet, tranquil, and peaceful existence that 1) is good and acceptable in God’s sight, and 2) fosters the salvation of those currently outside the community of faith. Thus, the men are ordered to cease and desist from the contentiousness that is hindering their prayers and beclouding their witness. What is clear is that the false teaching in the Ephesian church caused no small amount of upheaval within the congregation.

v.9 – Paul now turns his attention to the women in the congregation, using the logical connective *οσαυτως* (likewise). This indicates certain equivalence between the more general instructions he has given to the community of faith in vv. 1-2, as well as those specifically to the men in v. 8. The parameters of those instructions also apply here, in that 1) they address matters concerning the assembly of the church for prayer and worship, and 2) the goal of a quiet, peaceable, and tranquil life which facilitates the salvation of unbelievers is still in view.

vv. 9-10 – Some of the women in the congregation had been dressing extravagantly in expensive garb, wearing costly jewelry, and sporting elaborate hairstyles. In other words, they were dressing for church in such a way as to draw attention to themselves. They were flaunting their social status – upper class women in Greco-Roman cultures would be able to afford expensive clothes and jewelry, and typically wore complex hairstyles.

Here again, we see Paul countering the deleterious influence of the heresy that had infiltrated the Ephesian church. We know from II Timothy 3:6 that the false teachers had made inroads with some of the women in the community of faith. They erroneously believed that godliness was a means of financial gain (6:5), so as such Paul decries them as “lovers of money” – a character defect which “is the root of all sorts of evil” and leads people astray from the faith (6:10). Apparently, the greediness of the false teachers had influenced some of the women in the congregation.

vv. 11-12 – the word *ησυχια* is repeated. Its verb cognate, *ησυχάζω*, has two senses: 1) to lead a quiet life (1 Thes 4:11; 2 Thes 3:12), and 2) to be silent (Lk 14:4; Acts 11:18, 22:2). *ησυχια* has the same characteristics. Though carrying the sense of v. 2 (a quiet life) into vv. 11-12 may be an attractive option, the context indicates that a shift to its other meaning is warranted. Since Paul is forbidding teaching, which by definition requires oral communication, silence is a more natural rendition of *ησυχια* (though a case can easily be made for keeping the sense of v. 2 throughout the passage).

vv. 11-12 – A contrast exists in these verses between the women’s posture of learning in silence, which is prescribed by Paul (v. 11), and his prohibition that they teach or have authority over a man.

vv. 13-14 – Paul’s explanation or rationale for his prohibition in v. 12 hearkens back to the objective order of Creation – a woman is not permitted to teach or to have authority over a man because Adam was created first, not Eve. He further undergirds his prohibition by stating that it was Eve rather than Adam who was deceived by Satan’s temptation in Genesis 3.

v. 15 – The promise to women of preservation through childbirth is set in contrast with the fact that Eve was deceived and fell in to transgression. It is also conditional, hinging upon whether or not a woman continues “in faith and love and sanctity and self-restraint.” This is something of an obscure statement, but given the contrast with facts surrounding Eve’s transgression, it may have Eve’s punishment (pain in childbirth) in view (Gen 3:16). Notice that the conditions of the promise also feature language that is antithetical to the nature of false teaching at Ephesus. The heretics had rejected the instruction that produced love and sincere faith (1 Tm 1:5). Perhaps Paul’s point is that continued deception in the Ephesian context would compound and exacerbate the pain and travail of childbirth which all Eve’s daughters must bear. The promise of preservation is contingent upon parting with Eve’s example, i.e. eschewing false teaching and the resulting deception.