

COMMENTARY - TIMOTHY/TITUS - Demarest

Gary W. Demarest. The Communicator's Commentary on Timothy (Waco, TX. Word Inc, 1984),

Authorship and Authenticity

Until 1807, the traditional view of the Pauline authorship of these [three] letters was virtually unquestioned. The first scholar to insist that Paul could not have written them was Friedrich Schleiermacher, primarily on the grounds that they contain so many words used nowhere else in the letters of Paul. Beyond the vocabulary itself, Schleiermacher also insisted that there were concepts in the letters that were contradictory of Paul's theology as set forth in other epistles. The argue was put forth that the letters reflect as structure of church order with bishops and elders and traditions which could not have existed until the second century, perhaps not before A.D. 150. Since Paul was martyred prior to A.D. 70, the conclusion from such an assumption was obvious. ¹ Some other scholars affirm Paul's authorship of these letters. Demarest is one.

I Timothy 2: 11-15: Discrimination against women

¹¹Let a woman learn in silence with full submission. ¹²I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over a man;* she is to keep silent. ¹³For Adam was formed first, then Eve; ¹⁴and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. ¹⁵Yet she will be saved through childbearing, provided they continue in faith and love and holiness, with modesty.*

Before we examine the text itself, it's important to establish some ground rules on how we will read it. The commentator suggests three:

¹ Gary W. Demarest. The Communicator's Commentary on Timothy (Waco, TX. Word Inc, 1984), 148.

1. We must read the passage in the light of all other Scripture...The serious student may begin with Genesis 1:26-28, 2:18-25; 3:1-24 and work through numerous passages all pertaining to our understanding of male and female. Simplistic generalization barring women from public ministry have no place, for instance, when Priscilla is called by Paul, "a fellow worker in Christ Jesus" (Rom 16:3), and when Euodia and Syntyche are referred to as "these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers" (Phil. 4:3). The whole Scripture must be considered in the interpretation of any given passage. ²

2. We must distinguish between passages that describe events or practices at the time, and those that clearly teach principles designed for universal and timeless application.³

3. We must read the passage within its cultural, social and historical setting. It shouldn't startle anyone to be told that the Bible was written by real people, struggling with real problems, in real places and times. To read it with first century eyeglasses and hear it through twentieth century headsets is not always easy. But that is our task and privilege. ⁴

With these ground rules established, let us understand the issue of women Paul is addressing. Here is where an understanding of the social and cultural background of the New Testament period is essential. Christians in Ephesus were from both Jewish and Greek backgrounds. In the Jewish tradition, a woman was regarded more as a piece of property than as a person. She was

² Gary W. Demarest. The Communicator's Commentary on Timothy (Waco, TX. Word Inc, 1984), 175-176.

³ Gary W. Demarest. The Communicator's Commentary on Timothy (Waco, TX. Word Inc, 1984), 176.

⁴ Gary W. Demarest. The Communicator's Commentary on Timothy (Waco, TX. Word Inc, 1984), 176.

without rights or power. In spite of the honor given to her in such a passage as Proverbs 31, in actual practice outside of the home, she was not regarded as a person. There was a Jewish prayer in which the man thanked God that he was not a Gentile, a slave, or a woman. One could have lovely daughters, but a marriage without a male heir was considered a disaster.⁵

Women were also held to be nonpersons on the Greek side of the ledger. The life of the Greek woman was confined mostly to the home. And even at home, she was her husband's property. She lived in her own quarters and did not appear in public alone. She was rarely involved in community meetings or activities. Though there were some women in business, such as Lydia in Philippi (Acts 16:14), they were the exceptions and not the rule.⁶

One group of women in the New Testament period who did appear outside of the home were the sacred prostitutes. In Corinth, the Temple of Aphrodite boasted a thousands of them, and their activities were not confined to the Temple. It may have been difficult to walk the streets of Corinth without being confronted by some of them. In Ephesus, the Temple of Diana had hundreds of sacred prostitutes. Prostitutes were regarded as a form of worship to some of the gods.⁷

What we must realize is that when a woman became a Christian, she was, for the very first time in her life, regarded fully as a human being. The way in which Paul singled out women and preached to them (Acts 16:13) was a radical departure from Jewish and Greek culture.⁸ Treating a slave girl as a human

⁵ Gary W. Demarest. *The Communicator's Commentary on Timothy* (Waco, TX. Word Inc, 1984), 177.

⁶ Gary W. Demarest. *The Communicator's Commentary on Timothy* (Waco, TX. Word Inc, 1984), 177.

⁷ Gary W. Demarest. *The Communicator's Commentary on Timothy* (Waco, TX. Word Inc, 1984), 178.

⁸ Gary W. Demarest. *The Communicator's Commentary on Timothy* (Waco, TX. Word Inc, 1984), 178.

being landed Paul in prison (Acts 16:16-24). From the very beginning, women were sought and accepted in the fellowship. When Mark underscored the fact that there were number of women who traveled with Jesus, he was pointing to something very different and significant about the ministry of Jesus. And, of course, Paul summed up this radical difference that the Gospel made: "There is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:28). It does make a clean break with all cultural mores.⁹

About clothing: As women received their liberation in Christ from the old Hebrew and Greek suppressions, we have to believe that some of them went beyond the boundaries of common sense in expressing their new-found freedom and power. And one of the ways they announced their new-found status could well have been in the way they dressed and fixed their hair.¹⁰ Because clothing says something about the person wearing it, it is related to Christian witness. If a newly liberated women in the church of Ephesus were coming to the meetings in all kinds of finery and lavish accessories, they were making a statement as to what this Christian community believes about values. Extravagance and ostentation are always to be avoided, partly as our witness to our belief that our money should be used, not for selfish consumption, but for the Kingdom of God. It may well have been that the Christian women in Ephesus were looking more like prostitutes than like newly redeemed children of God.¹¹

Leadership in the church (vv. 11-12)

¹¹Let a woman learn in silence with full submission. ¹²I permit no woman* to teach or to have authority over a man;* she is to keep silent.*

⁹ Gary W. Demarest. The Communicator's Commentary on Timothy (Waco, TX. Word Inc, 1984), 178.

¹⁰ Gary W. Demarest. The Communicator's Commentary on Timothy (Waco, TX. Word Inc, 1984), 178.

¹¹ Gary W. Demarest. The Communicator's Commentary on Timothy (Waco, TX. Word Inc, 1984), 179.

If we read this passage and its companion in 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 in the light of our three ground rules, we will be able to come to some reasonable conclusions: As is true in all of his letters, Paul is addressing specific people and specific situations. The Jewish women had never been allowed to read the Scriptures in the synagogue or to teach in a school. In the temple at Jerusalem, she could only go as far as the outer court. The Greek woman had rarely had an opportunity to be heard by anyone outside her home. Some new liberated women might have carried away. A few women might have seized power and were dominating the leadership and worship of the church in Corinth and in Ephesus.¹²

What the interpreter must decide, then, is the scope of application. Were these only local situations that needed the drastic remedy that Paul described, or was Paul setting forth a universal rule to be applied in all churches, in all places? The author prefers the former. Paul is clearly referring to his personal practice. It seems that this practice is to be limited rather than universal in the church.¹³

Paul seems to address some women who had lost the art of listening. Coming out of the deprivations that had long been imposed upon them, they had a lot to learn. They needed to do a lot of listening, and this the appeal to "*lean in silence with all submission*" may not have sounded to them the way it sounds to us. Author hears it as good pedagogical advice in that particular setting, a corrective to some local abuses which could occur anywhere, anytime.¹⁴

Demarest's comments: My conviction is that we have no basis for relegating women to subservient roles in the church on the basis of the whole of Scripture.

¹² Gary W. Demarest. The Communicator's Commentary on Timothy (Waco, TX. Word Inc, 1984), 180.

¹³ Gary W. Demarest. The Communicator's Commentary on Timothy (Waco, TX. Word Inc, 1984), 180.

¹⁴ Gary W. Demarest. The Communicator's Commentary on Timothy (Waco, TX. Word Inc, 1984), 181.

Functional roles are not clearly established by the New Testament. The long history of the emergency of different structures and officers in the churches certainly attests to the fact that no single pattern is set forth in the Scriptures. To take the Bible seriously must mean that we begin with creation of male and female, both in the image of God. It must also mean that we honor the gifts of the Holy Spirit given to all believers. To restrict the recognition of such gifts on the basis of sexuality is hardly consistent with Paul's classic statement: "There is neither male nor female; for you are one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28).¹⁵

The Fall revisited (vv. 13-15).

¹⁴*and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.* ¹⁵*Yet she will be saved through childbearing, provided they continue in faith and love and holiness, with modesty.*

Verse 13-14 were probably representative of the prevailing view of the rabbis at that time. The same idea is expressed in I Corinthians 11:8-9, in which the fact that man was created first, and that woman was created from the man, is said to establish man's priority and superiority over the woman. The rabbis also added that though woman was second in creation, she was the first to sin. To argue that the sequence of the creation narrative teaches the superiority of the man certainly goes beyond anything said in Genesis.

Two classic statements in Matthew Henry's eighteenth century commentary are worth recalling: "*Eve's being made after Adam, and out of him, puts an honor upon the sex, as the glory of man, (1 Cor. 11:7). If man is the head, she is the crown ... the man was dust refined, but the woman was dust double-refined, one remove further from the earth.*" The second has been more widely quoted: "...

¹⁵ Gary W. Demarest. *The Communicator's Commentary on Timothy* (Waco, TX. Word Inc, 1984), 181.

not made out of his head to rule over him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved."¹⁶

She will be saved by child bearing:

To make childbirth a means or requirement for being saved is clearly inconsistent with Paul's view of salvation "by grace through faith in Jesus Christ" (Eph. 2: 8-9). But the Greek word for "saved" is not used in the New Testament exclusively in the sense of spiritual salvation. It is also used to mean "health or wholeness." It is used in the Gospels in connection with Jesus' healings. But even if it is taken in that sense here, we still have the implication that women can find true wholeness only through bearing children. Many single women would testify otherwise.¹⁷

Yet another approach is to regard motherhood in general as a very wholesome and health-giving experience, reinforcing the traditional view of the Hebrew and Greek cultures that woman's basic value was in giving birth to children and raising them. Paul is only addressing some specific needs in that particular situation, out of which comes helpful guidance about officers and leaders in the church.¹⁸

I Timothy 6:7-10: The love of money: a Root of Evil

⁷for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it;
⁸but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. ⁹But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains

¹⁶ Demarest. Communicator's Commentary on Timothy, 182.

¹⁷ Demarest. Communicator's Commentary on Timothy, 182.

¹⁸ Demarest. Communicator's Commentary on Timothy, 183.

Contentment: Godliness – love, devotion, and commitment to Christ – is the source of our well-being. We intellectually accept the fact that money in itself cannot bring us ‘contentment,’ but we are still hooked on the premise that it is in some way essential. Our preoccupation with material security and economic abundance makes this quite clear. There’s a great difference between seeking godliness as an end in itself or as a means of gain [as most Christians do].

The first step in developing one’s attitude toward money is to put it in perspective. ‘*We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.*’ ‘You can’t take it with you.’ ‘Shrouds have no pockets.’ So why do we spend so much time and energy multiplying and accumulating wealth? The reason most often given is that we should ‘save for a rainy day.’ Multiplying and accumulating wealth so that one will not become a burden to others certainly seems prudent –from a human point of view. But what warrant is there for this viewpoint if we take Jesus seriously? We readily quote Matthew 6:33, ‘But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.’ But are we truly aware of the force of these words? The context of Matthew 6:25-34 determines their meaning: ¹⁹‘Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on Look at the birds in the air If God so clothes the grass of the fields ... will he not much more clothes you? ... for your heavenly father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. *Therefore*, do not worry about tomorrow. ²⁰ [the homeless people I serve will say this doesn’t or didn’t happen to them. They sleep outside but God didn’t offer them a single room to sleep in dry. What do we say to them?]

When seen in this light, the multiplication and accumulation of wealth can become a curse rather than a blessing. In two ways. It removes us from the place

¹⁹ Demarest. Communicator's Commentary on Timothy, 220.

²⁰ Demarest. Communicator's Commentary on Timothy, 221.

of being truly dependent upon God. And its management demands more and more of our time and energy. ²¹

We are bombarded [bomb/attack] constantly with the message that financial independence is the great goal of the good life. From life insurance to money market funds, pension funds, to IRAs, investments to real estate. The great design is to achieve financial security and independence. As in so many things, half-truths have way of dominating the whole. This is different from the wise planning that keep one from being a burden to others. At what real points in life do we have to trust God? Is our trust in God limited only to “spiritual” things, or is He the Lord of all of life? Does God really promise to provide for our necessities? At what point do we cease expanding our “needs” list? How much is enough? Consumerism is an infectious lifestyle, and most of us are more deeply infected than we realize or admit. ²²

[Harvard professor, Kawachee and Kennedy claim that we are sick with shopping disorder].

A clear and simple principle of the Christian view of wealth is set forth for all time by Paul in 2 Corinthians 8:9-15. “...that *though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich*” **(8:9)**. The principle is clear. The rich are to divest themselves for the sake of the poor. This is what Jesus did. It is what we are to do. The well-known encounter of Jesus with the rich young ruler certainly establishes this point. ²³

In the movie, *Oh, God*, John Denver is talking with “God” and raises the classic question, “If you are so loving and good, how come there are so many people starving in the world? To which “God” replies: “Look, I gave you plenty to go around for everyone. As long as some of you insist on having more than you need, others will go hungry.””

²¹ Demarest. Communicator's Commentary on Timothy, 221.

²² Demarest. Communicator's Commentary on Timothy, 221.

²³ Demarest. Communicator's Commentary on Timothy, 222.

[Therefore, I say, the poverty and homelessness in the U.S. is the issue of wealth and system/policy that allows people to accumulate as much as and endlessly one can accumulate. This leaves out many in poverty and homelessness. And these wealth owners control most of policy-making of our leaders. And therefore, the whole nation and every single person is under the control of the wealth and its owners].

Paul's another principle is in 2 Corinthians **8:13-14**: ¹³*I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between* ¹⁴*your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance.* (NIV). In other versions balance is interpreted as "equality." The shifting sands of economics create changing scenes of wealth and poverty. Wealthy individuals become poor, and vice versa. When you are up, you help the one who is down – when you're down, you'll be helped. For underneath it all God provides enough for all of us and holds us responsible for the distribution. It's hard to believe that it is responsible and faithful stewardship of God's good earth when 6 percent of us consume and control 50 percent of the world's resources. ²⁴

Paul concludes his statement to Timothy by pointing out what the pursuit of wealth does to us. The desire to be rich causes us to "fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts." ²⁵ The issue is not having wealth, but desiring it. The very desire is the trap. The desire for wealth has a way becoming all-consuming. The drive for wealth is nothing less than an obsession.

Jesus' counsel: "Do not lay up for yourselves treasure on earth ... but lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven ... for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matt. 6:19-21).

²⁴ Demarest. Communicator's Commentary on Timothy, 222.

²⁵ Demarest. Communicator's Commentary on Timothy, 222.

Unchecked desire for money leads to the love of money. And love of money is “*a root of all kinds of evil.*” Money itself is neither good nor evil; it is morally neutral. It is the way of how we use money that is either good or evil. The love of money is called greed. And greed has a way of becoming all-consuming. How much is enough? Until we answer that question specifically and measurably we will never withdraw ourselves from greed’s grasp. [The author of Colossians call greed ‘idolatry’]. So to Paul, the boundary of [how much is enough] is drawn in I Tim. 6:8: “And having food and clothing, with these shall be content.” Where do we draw the line that day, “this is all I need?” Where there is no line, the love of money becomes a dominant passion. ²⁶

I Tim. 6: 17-19: The wealthy

As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. ¹⁸They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, ¹⁹thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.

While the early churches consisted mostly of people who were poor, there were some believers of wealth. They are given four specific commands: they are not to be haughty; they are to trust in God, not in their wealth; they are to do good; and they are to be rich in good works, and giving and sharing. One of the peril [danger] of being wealthy is pride. Wealth brings a sense of achievement. It also grants power and privilege. There simply is no place for pride in the Kingdom of God, and that’s why Jesus said, with great compassion, “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God” (Luke 18:24). It’s ironic that we make it quite easy for people with wealth to enter our churches –

²⁶ Demarest. Communicator's Commentary on Timothy, 222-223.

and even give them special attention (James 2:1-4) –but the fact is that wealth is a hindrance to God’s Kingdom. Why? Because it leads to pride and a haughty mind.²⁷

It is an even greater hindrance because it diminishes the necessity of our faith in God. There is fine line between having and trusting wealth. Jesus diagnosed the rich young ruler as being unable to draw that line, calling him to divest himself of his riches in order that he might be able to trust God. The only way they can do that is by strict disciplines of doing good, especially through giving and sharing.²⁸

Paul’s [the author’s] principle was that of equality and fairness. [This principle is recorded in] 2 Corinthians 8:13-15 in connection with Timothy 6: 6-10. It’s significant that Paul [the author] quoted Exodus 16:18 in the Corinthian passage. “He who gathers much had nothing left over, and he who gathered little had no lack” (2 Cor. 8:15).The proper use of wealth is not saving –it is sharing. Many of us were raised on the philosophy that “a penny saved is a penny earned.” We must change our thinking to “a penny *shared* is a penny earned.” Demarest wonders, will we ever be willing to deal with this principle honestly and realistically in the Christian Church on a global scale. [In my opinion most of us would say NO. One of the ways we can do is pay more tax to the government and let it help the poor that we are not willing to do. In other words, pay tax as a way for charity. Most contemporary Americans don’t want to do that either]. Demarest quoted: it has been said that *if we could reduce the world to a global village of one hundred people: seventy would be unable to read, one would have a college education, fifty would be suffering from malnutrition, eighty would live in housing unfit for human habitation, and six would control half the money of the entire village.* [This analysis has been out there for s decades now]. Demarest asks, if those of us among the six who are Christians are going to take Jesus seriously, how much longer can we justify controlling, spending, and

²⁷ Demarest. Communicator’s Commentary on Timothy, 227.

²⁸ Demarest. Communicator’s Commentary on Timothy, 228.

hoarding half of the resources intended for all 100 of us? He is quite convinced that we must face up to the needs of others if we are going to take our faith seriously.²⁹ He charges us to follow Paul's admonition [caution] to the affluent to give and to share: *Storing up for ourselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future.*³⁰

²⁹ Demarest. Communicator's Commentary on Timothy, 228.

³⁰ Demarest. Communicator's Commentary on Timothy, 229.