

3.18.19 - Thoughts on 1 Timothy 2:9-15

1Ti 2:9 - In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; - This verse is used to justify dress codes for women and to justify the idea that we must all wear clothing all the time. The logic goes something like this: modest means what the group determines that it means and apparel means that naked is not a choice. The fact that the group gets to determine the definition of modesty means that the group is now placing themselves in authority over us instead of allowing the Bible to be our authority. The words "In like manner" suggest that we should look at what Paul is discussing to be sure we check the context of the passage (always a good idea). When we get all the way up to 1 Tim 2:1 we learn that the topic is prayer. In the verse before men are told **I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.** Verse 9 then is instructions on what additional things were expected of women when praying or to help their husbands with their prayers. In **Heb 12:28** -the Greek word translated "shamefacedness" is translated "reverence" which makes more sense since the topic is prayer.

Sometimes it's just as important to look at what the verse is not saying in order to get a little perspective...this verse does not say that this is the adorning that a woman needs at all times. As we have discussed in previous articles, the fact is that in Bible times most people only had one garment. Jesus' instruction to the apostles was, "if you have two cloaks sell one and buy a sword" meaning that most did not have two. Due to their limited wardrobe they laid it aside whenever there was a possibility that it would get soiled and the work could be done without clothing. Peter's fishing naked is an easy example of this. With only one garment, they were naked while washing it.

Additionally, textile people have differing opinions as to what "modest apparel" even is. They even have different opinions based on occasion...while attending church vs while grocery shopping. Even the definition of "modest apparel" at church will differ depending on the denomination and even which service you're attending. There just is no objective standard, the standard then becomes whatever my definition is, that's the one you must obey. Now, the verse does use the words "every where" so we should not restrict ourselves to church functions, but that is where most of the rules apply. Some denominations require skirts or dresses on all women at all times, while others are ok with slacks. Some denominations require a hair covering of some sort and other denominations say that a woman's hair is her covering and so it must be long hair, but even the definition of long can be subjective.

There is also no description of how much may be exposed or what must be covered to be "modest", so all the dress regulations are added to the verse or justified by the verse without any examples in the verse about covering parts of the woman's body. All the examples in the verse are related to costly and calling attention to yourself. Regardless of what is covered or not covered, the cost would be known and would detract from a prayerful attitude. It is hard enough to keep our minds on prayer without thinking what we could do with the money that woman spent on her "adorning".

Modest is usually regarded as appropriate in this verse, but usually for justifying dress standards for women. The verse carries some of that message and lists what is not appropriate. If you accept that substitution, then we contend that nakedness is appropriate for sunbathing and swimming and work that might be dirty work that does not require body protection like painting, gardening, etc.

1Ti 2:10 - But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. Much can be learned about a person by looking at their clothing and their lifestyle. Costly clothing, especially if the budget is tight, indicate that pride is

a big spiritual problem for the person. Good works takes our minds off of ourselves and puts it on others; how to help that person or who could I bless with all that God has sent my way. Both are closer to a prayerful attitude than adoring that says, "look at how wealthy I am".

1Ti 2:11 - Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. Here is where consistent interpretation of Scripture might get you...because "if" you are going to use verse 9 to say a woman must be clothed at all times in a certain manner, then this verse says that women are to be seen and not heard. The next verse could be used as a supporting verse. You may be able to get women to submit to the clothing standard, but this is going to be MUCH harder to win submission to. What the verse really means can be found by understanding that the Greek word used for "doubting" in verse 8 above can also be translated "disputing" which would make this much easier to understand. In other words, "Argue with your wife at home, so that you do not seem unloving and she does not seem disrespectful."

1Ti 2:12 - But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. If verse 9 says a naked woman is immodest, then this verse would forbid a woman to ever teach or be in authority over a man. Deborah, in Judges would be in violation of this verse if that is what it means. Priscilla in **Act 18:26 - And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.** would have not been included if only Aquila did the expounding. Prophetess occurs 8 times in the KJV and only one was an enemy of God. Certainly, these women were teachers, so this verse does not forbid a woman to teach just like verse 9 does not forbid a woman to be naked.

1Ti 2:13 - For Adam was first formed, then Eve. 14 - And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. These verses are supporting verses

for 11 and 12 above. Paul is giving reasons for the rules in verses 11 and 12.

1Ti 2:15 - Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety. Again, if verse 9 is saying that nakedness is a sin, then this verse indicates that a woman who has no children or has children who go into the world, can not be saved. Jesus in **John 3:16 - For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.** does not add child bearing to the conditions for being saved. There are many other verses that say about the same thing, so that is not what Paul is trying to say here. There are many examples to support the fact that nakedness is not a sin throughout the Bible. So, verse 9 is not saying that it is. In fact, it was so common in New Testament times that Paul did not comment on it.

Conclusion - It is easy to see how a verse that is taken out of context can be misapplied and used to mean whatever someone wants it to if they are not super careful to examine the scriptures seeking the truth, not just their own agenda. In fact, in this case usually only the first part of the verse is expounded on and the examples are not mentioned. When the whole verse and the verses around it are considered, it is clear that wealth display is the issue. It was not our purpose to explain what the other verses meant, only to point what they obviously do not mean. Something for you to study on your own and allow the Holy Spirit to teach you what they mean.