

Women Teaching and Leading in the Bible

1 Timothy 2:11-15

Ben Deaver @ Tallgrass Church Central Gathering on September 16, 2018

Announcements:

- MHK Flood Relief—Blue tub
- Tuesday Eastside LIFE Group starting THIS Tuesday
- Back to the Schooler's Party
- Guys' Campout—RSVP for a kayak (if you want one) to Dilan by THIS Tuesday
- Women's Campout
- Renberg Family Farm Fall Party
- Marriage Retreat
- Shout-out to the Thorpes (Steve, Rebecca, Christian, Logan, June, Madoc, and LUCY!!!)
 - Two cards, one to Thorpes and one to Lucy

Lois and Eunice, Timothy's Grandmother and Mother

2nd Timothy 1:5 I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well.

Mingle Question—Who are a couple spiritually significant women in your life?

Welcome!

- Aiming for Love in the Household of God
- Last week we tackled 1 Timothy 2:11-15

SEE HANDOUT!!!—Four Views on Women in the Home, Church, and Society

Slaves, Women, and Homosexuals by William Webb

- Hard Patriarchy (Highly Complementarian)—More consistent in application of their interpretation than some.
- Soft Patriarchy (Complementarian)—Lacks consistency in application compared to interpretation.
- Evangelical Egalitarianism—Can still retain complementarian structure in the home while being egalitarian in the church and society.
- Secular Egalitarianism—Not directly rooted in biblical insight although one can strongly make the case that most gains in social justice are driven by a Judeo-Christian worldview.

Puzzle Pieces as Context

- This passage is in a letter written by Paul. Letters are occasional documents. They address specific occasions.
- Kind of like putting pieces of a puzzle together. We don't have all the pieces but we have enough pieces to see the picture. It's sufficient but not exhaustive information. Puzzles that are missing a few pieces are often so unsatisfying...but you still get the picture!
- Context, context, context!!!—Words are in phrases which are in sentences which are in paragraphs which are in sections which are in genres (which in this case is an Epistle, or letter) which are in Testaments (in this case the New Testament) which are in canon which were written into culture (which includes the time too)! The cultures into which the Scriptures were written are Ancient Near Eastern, Greco-Roman, and Jewish.

Some Puzzles are Difficult

This is a difficult passage! It may be the type of passage that Peter referred to in 2 Peter 3.

- **2 Peter 3:16b** ^{16b} There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.
- Our 2nd Timothy 2 passage probably wasn't as difficult to those who read it back *then* and *there*. Peter was probably referring to passages on the Law. But our passage tonight is difficult to us *here* and *now*.
- This is a very difficult puzzle! It's like one of those 1000 piece puzzles.
- IMPORTANT!!! Interpret the unclear passages in light of the clear passages.
 - Don't build a prominent doctrine based on one verse in the Bible, especially when there are many passages that would call your doctrine into major question.

Convictions:

1. We must seek to be faithful to the intent of the Scriptures.
2. We must be consistent in our interpretation and application of the Scriptures, even if that means we've got to work very hard at exegesis and hermeneutics.
3. Women must be treated with dignity and respect.
4. Men must not be passive.
5. We all bring ourselves to the Scriptures.

Puzzle Pieces in 1st Timothy 2

Exercise authority over a man

1 Timothy 2:11-15 ¹¹ Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. ¹² I do not permit a woman to teach or to **exercise authority over** a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. ¹³ For Adam was formed first, then Eve; ¹⁴ and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. ¹⁵ Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control.

- This is the only usage of this Greek word in the entire New Testament.
- The KJV translates this as, “nor to usurp authority over the man...”
- This reminds me of part of the judgment of the fall.

I Suffer Not a Woman: Rethinking 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in Light of Ancient Evidence by Richard Clark Kroeger and Catherine Clark Kroeger

- “If there is one verse in the Bible more than any other which is used to disbar women from proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ and exercising their talents for his glory, it is 1 Timothy 2:12.” (pp. 11-12)
- “In this book, we shall suggest that 1 Timothy 2:11-15 is not a decree of timeless and universal restriction and punishment but a corrective: a specific direction as to what women should not teach and why.” (p. 23)

Four Possible Meanings of “Authentein”

1. To begin something, to be primarily responsible for a condition or action (especially murder)
 2. To rule, to dominate
 3. To usurp power or rights from another
 4. To claim ownership, sovereignty, or authorship
- “Which meaning we should select for the best rendering of *authentein* in 1 Timothy 2:12 is not a conclusion easily reached.” (p. 87)
 - “Translation is not an exact science. One has only to compare different translations of the Bible to see that at some points the sense has been understood differently. Competent scholars may render a given text by a variety of expressions, and each in its own way may be correct. Many Greek words have more than one

meaning, and the translator's task is to choose the expression which in her or his understanding is most congruent with the sense of the entire passage and best fits the context." (p. 87)

- "The Scriptures themselves, as well as the vigorous leadership provided by the women of Asia Minor in the first few centuries of the church, cause us to question the traditional interpretation. A prohibition against women assuming positions of authority is inconsistent with the strong evidence demonstrating that in the early Christian communities women were most certainly engaged in leadership. Presumably they did not consider this Scripture to be a deterrent. How, then, might they have understood it?" (p. 92)
- "The related adjective, *authentikos*, like the English 'authentic,' means something original or genuine." (p. 99)
- "In early Christian writings, God is called the architect and builder (*authéntēs*) of a tower. In a second century C.E. Christian novel, the term is used for 'the sole creator.'" (p. 100)
- "*Authentein*, when used with the genitive, as it is in 1 Timothy 2:12, could imply not only to claim sovereignty but also to claim authorship." (p. 102)

Puzzle Pieces in Archeology

- Artemis of Ephesus (left); Cybele, Mountain Mother (above); Egyptian Isis (right)
- ARTEMIS and CYBELE—"While Artemis held sway in the great temple, Cybele maintained her stronghold on the mountain overlooking the shrine." (p. 108)
- "We suggest that the writer of the Pastorals was opposing a doctrine which acclaimed motherhood as the ultimate reality. Our Bible maintains that God, who far transcends all limitations of gender, created the heavens and the earth, and that all things are of God." (p. 112)
- "Didymus the Blind, a late-fourth-century biblical commentator, seems to have understood 1 Timothy 2:12 as focusing on the concept of man as source of women. (In Greek, unlike English, the word for 'head' was ordinarily used in a metaphorical sense to mean 'source' rather than 'authority.')
- "If 1 Timothy 2:12 is translated as prohibiting women from claiming the power of origin, it fits with the refutation which follows. Women are forbidden to teach that female activity brought man into existence because, according to the Scriptures, Adam was created first. Eve, for all her desire to bring enlightenment did not bring gnosis but transgression." (p. 113)
- "We suggest that these verses are not intended as the rationale for prohibiting a gospel ministry for women, but rather they constitute a refutation of a widespread heresy. Specifically, we consider this to be directed against Gnostic or proto-Gnostic mythology glorifying Eve. We have already mentioned the preoccupation of the false teachers with stories which they distorted." (p. 117)
- "Ialdabaoth, as the god of Genesis 1-3 is sometimes called, is one of the lower powers. He creates the physical world, and that is a grievous mistake. According to the Gnostic view, the material universe is evil, manufactured by a third-rate spiritual being. Thus the God of the Old Testament comes off very badly indeed, both for his creation of a world composed of matter and for his view that he is the supreme sovereign. Ialdabaoth is so blind that he does not even know of the existence of the higher powers." (p. 118)
- "When Adam and Eve are placed in the Garden of Eden, they believe that Ialdabaoth is the supreme deity. Here Satan, another of the powers, appears as a great benefactor. He realized that Adam and Eve, caught in the deception perpetrated by Ialdabaoth, have no knowledge of the Supreme Being of the universe. They cannot attain to him because they do not even know of his existence. Their problem is lack of knowledge, and yet they have been forbidden to eat of the tree of knowledge. Assuming the form of a serpent, Satan communicates this wonderful *gnōsis*, or knowledge, to Eve, who then snares it with Adam. The two of them can now seek the Supreme Being who is far above the material world, seek to rise above the earth to his abode in pure spirituality, and seek to escape the unfortunate influence of Ialdabaoth." (p. 118)

Another very credible translation possibility

¹²“I do not permit woman to teach nor to represent herself as originator of man but she is to be in conformity [with the Scriptures]. ¹³For Adam was created first, then Eve.” (p. 103)

- “Throughout the Pastorals, the Word of God is represented as the antidote for false teaching. The women needed to make sure that both their study and their instructing accorded with sacred writ. They should cease from promulgating a deviant doctrine and bring themselves into accord with God’s Word.” (p. 104)

The Gospel IS NOT Myth!!!

2 Peter 1:16 For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

Puzzle Pieces in Romans 16

- 10 of the 27 references in this chapter are to women.
- This would have been shocking in the heavily patriarchal world of the 1st century.
- Laura Wallace is going to read our passage tonight. She’s excited to read all the difficult names.

Laura reads Romans 16:1-16

Romans 16:1-7 ¹ I commend to you our sister **Phoebe**, a servant of the church at Cenchreae, ² that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well. ³ Greet **Prisca** and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, ⁴ who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well. ⁵ Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia. ⁶ Greet **Mary**, who has worked hard for you. ⁷ Greet Andronicus and **Junia**, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me.

- Women are Phoebe, Prisca, Mary, Junia

Phoebe, Deacon of the Church

¹ I commend to you our sister **Phoebe**, a servant of the church at Cenchreae, ² that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well.

- Two whole verses! Of course the chapter and verse divisions were added to the Bible much later but still.
- She’s a deacon. Very clearly a deacon of the church. Whaddya think about that?
- She’s a patron of many including Paul himself. Perhaps she’s rolling in the dough.

Prisca, Bible Teacher

³ Greet **Prisca** and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, ⁴ who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well.

- Powerhouse couple. Solid ministry team.
- **Acts 18:1-4** ¹ After this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. ² And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. And he went to see them, ³ and because he was of the same trade he stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade.
- Traveled to Syria with Paul (Acts 18:18)
- **Acts 18:24-26** ²⁴ Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures. ²⁵ He had been instructed in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of

John. ²⁶ He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.

- Priscilla is typically listed before Aquila. That's a big deal. This indicates that she was the more prominent leader of the two in the church. And apparently that's ok. At least it seems to be ok.
- (*Acts 18:18-19, 26; Romans 16:3; 1 Cor. 16:19*). The majority of times she and her husband (Aquila) are mentioned, Priscilla is mentioned first. This unusual in the 1st century world, and likely denotes that she played the more prominent or visible role in their labors for Christ. Priscilla is a key teacher of one of the most prominent teachers in the New Testament (Apollos). She is listed as a co-worker and co-leader of a church that meets in her home. There is no indication that she played any type of secondary role. In fact, if she had a male name, one wonders if everyone (including the historical evangelical interpreter) would just assume she was a fully engaged, fully functioning leader and teacher. Since she has a female name, all sorts of arbitrary mental gymnastics are required to explain her prominent role.

Mary, Hard Worker

⁶ Greet **Mary**, who has worked hard for you.

Junia, Woman Apostle

⁷ Greet Andronicus and **Junia**, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me.

- So many translators have tried to make Junia a dude! C'mon guys, you can't make Junia a dude. She's a woman. Let her be a woman. Please.
 - <http://juniaproject.com/who-killed-junia-part-one/>
- NASB—Greet Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners, who are outstanding among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.
- KJV—Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.
- Most likely a married couple who had seen the risen Christ and were both considered apostles. In fact, they were BOTH noteworthy among the apostles.

Romans 16:8-16 ⁸ Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. ⁹ Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. ¹⁰ Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus. ¹¹ Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. ¹² Greet those workers in the Lord, **Tryphaena** and **Tryphosa**. Greet the beloved **Persis**, who has worked hard in the Lord. ¹³ Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his **mother**, who has been a mother to me as well. ¹⁴ Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them. ¹⁵ Greet Philologus, **Julia**, Nereus and his **sister**, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them. ¹⁶ Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

- The women listed here are Tryphaena and Tryphosa, Persis, Rufus' mother, Julia, and Nereus' sister.

Tryphaena & Tryphosa, Workers in the Lord

Persis, Paul's Beloved Female Friend

- Beloved Persis?!?!?! Paul had a female friend who was not specifically tied to a husband or a brother that he called *beloved*? I guess men and women can also be friends?
 - Brothers and sisters in Christ being friends? Let's be above reproach. Let's develop and deepen our friendships with those of the same gender. At the same time, let's not be afraid to be friends, dear sisters in Christ. Let's model to the watching world what healthy relationships can and should look like. Let's make this a topic of conversation. #awkwardisthenewawesome

- “Greet *one another* with a holy kiss”?!?!? That means the brothers and sisters are supposed to be kissing one another? Hmm... I suppose we DO NEED to greet one another after all. What does this mean practically? Handshakes? Hugs? Side hugs? High fives? It’s gotta be some kind of greeting for our church family.
- Women in Romans 16
 - <http://matthiasmedia.com/briefing/2008/07/women-in-romans-16/>
 - <http://www.ezerrising.com/the-10-women-of-romans-16-apostles-dear-friends-deacons-hard-workers-and-co-ministers/>

Rufus’ Mother, A Mother to Paul

Julia & Nereus’ Sister

Other Prominent New Testament Women

Mary Magdalene, the Apostle to the Apostles—*Luke 8:2*

- Duc In Altum (“launch into the deep”)—Duc In Altum exalts the presence of women in the Gospel. Thanks to Divine Providence, this idea was materialized in Magdala, hometown of Mary Magdalene. Mary was a follower of Jesus among other women who supported him with their own means (Luke 8).
- **Luke 8:1-3** ¹ Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him, ² and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, ³ and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's household manager, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means.
- The Luke 8 Brave Tribe of Women
- You think Jesus was trying to silence women? Bro, they were payin’ His bills! Jesus was elevating women in His culture AND in His ministry.
- Present at the crucifixion—Mark 15:40; Matthew 27:55-56; Luke 23:49
 - **Mark 15:40-41** ⁴⁰ There were also women looking on from a distance, among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. ⁴¹ When he was in Galilee, they followed him and ministered to him, and there were also many other women who came up with him to Jerusalem.
 - All these women were present at the crucifixion while the men had fled out of fear. Remember that?
 - Why weren’t the women weren’t bothered by the Roman or Jewish authorities? In both of those patriarchal cultures the women didn’t pose a threat. So they weren’t bothered. The men fled because they would’ve been in trouble with both the Romans and the Jews. Women weren’t a threat, or so it seemed. To be continued...
- Present at the tomb—Mark 16:1-8; Matthew 28:1-10; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-10
 - What about 1 Corinthians 15:3-8 not mentioning the women as seeing the Risen Christ? Patriarchal culture left them out.
- **Acts 8:3** But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men *and women* and committed them to prison.
 - Why was Paul dragging off and imprisoning women too? They weren’t considered a threat while Jesus was being crucified. It’s because they too were leaders in the early church. They were now rockin’ Gospel teaching and it was a big threat to the religious establishment.

Mary of Bethany, Torah Student—*Luke 10:39*

Luke 10:38-42 ³⁸ Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. ³⁹ And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me." ⁴¹ But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, ⁴² but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her."

- Martha's upset not primarily because she wants more help in the kitchen, although maybe she did want a little help. Martha's upset because her sister, Mary, has overstepped her position by sitting at the feet of Jesus.
- Sitting at the feet of Jesus isn't just gazing up longingly like some starstruck fan or like some child at storytime. She is sitting at Jesus' feet like the Apostle Paul was sitting at the feet of Gamaliel (see Acts 22:3) learning some Torah so he could be a teacher of the Torah. Luke uses his words very intentionally in his Gospel account. Mary is legit learning from Jesus. And you don't learn from Jesus just so you can have better Quiet Times in your own little devotional life. You learn from Jesus so you can teach others about Jesus!
- "Let a woman learn..." 1 Timothy 2:10
- "Pray for laborers..." Luke 10:2
- "How can Christ's followers pray this (Matthew 9:36-38) sincerely when they are at the same time doing their best to deter half of those laborers?" *I Suffer Not a Woman: Rethinking 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in Light of Ancient Evidence* by Richard Clark Kroeger and Catherine Clark Kroeger (p. 24)

Lydia of Thyatira, Church Leader at Philippi—*Acts 16:11-15, 40*

- **Acts 16:11-15** ¹¹ So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis, ¹² and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days. ¹³ And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. ¹⁴ One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. ¹⁵ And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us.
- **Acts 16:40** ⁴⁰ So they went out of the prison and visited Lydia. And when they had seen the brothers, they encouraged them and departed.
- Lydia was mentioned by name. That in and of itself is a big deal. So many in the book of Acts go unnamed. Hundreds, thousands responding to the Gospel in the early church go without any mention at all. Lydia was prominent, no doubt.
- Lydia's from Thyatira, a seller of purple good. She's a successful business woman.
- When Paul and his companions wanted to plant and spread the Gospel in Philippi, they chose to go first to a gathering of praying women.
- This is where the Lord opened Lydia's heart to pay attention to what Paul said.
- Later on, after some time has passed and after Paul and Silas are released from prison, we read that the fledgling church was gathered at Lydia's house.
- Though this does not speak directly to leadership roles, it is at least curious that Paul would choose to plant the Gospel in an area by first reaching women if they in fact were not permitted to have any leadership role in the church.

- Euodia and Syntyche, Disturbance Needing Reconciliation, not Silence—*Philippians 4:2-3*
 - **Philippians 4:2-3** ²I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. ³Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.
 - It also interesting to note that the only Philippians mentioned by name in Paul’s letter to them were also women (Euodia and Syntyche).
 - Labored *side by side* with Paul and Clement and the rest of his fellow workers. You do not get the sense of male leadership only within this description of the early church.
 - Once again, in and of itself this proves nothing, but it infers that these two women had sufficient influence in the church such as to be destructive when they were in conflict. They are not a picture of silence and submission, and Paul mentions nothing here about their problem being that they were daring to speak up in the church. Rather, he instructs them to “agree in the Lord.”
- 1 Corinthians 11 Women, Leaders in the Central Gathering!
 - Talked about this passage and 1 Corinthians 14 last week.
- And certainly don’t forget Mary, Mother of Jesus!
 - Don’t overlook the Magnificat.
 - Mary, the Mother of Jesus, was amazing.
- All those who are unnamed—Don’t forget all the spiritual gifts lists and exhortations to teach one another that were addressed to the brothers AND sisters in the early church!

Puzzle Pieces in the Old Testament

- Sarah—*Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-8; Hebrews 11:11*
- Hagar—*Genesis 16:1-16; 21:8-21* (Checkout talk on *God’s Heart for Ishmael* by Ben Deaver at New Hope Church on November 12, 2017; <http://newhopeks.org/messages/2017/11/12/gods-heart-for-ishmael>)
- Rahab—*Joshua 2:1-3; 6:21-25; Matthew 1:5; Hebrews 11:31*
- Deborah, the Judge—*Judges 4:4-10; Hebrews 11:32* (references Barak but Deborah was the leader here)
 - She’s a clearly appointed-by-God female leader
 - If the men aren’t leading then a woman has to.
 - Wouldn’t it follow, then, that God would put a woman leader in place time and time again.
 - Most of the judges and kings were terrible, evil leaders.
 - However, doesn’t this story demonstrate that God does not prohibit women in leadership?
- Hannah—*1 Samuel 1-2*
- The Wise Woman of Abel of Beth-maacah—*2 Samuel 20:14-22*
- Hulda—*2 Kings 22:14-20; 2 Chronicles 34:22-28*
- Ruth—*Book of Ruth; Matthew 1:5*
- Esther—*Book of Esther*
- Proverbs 31 Woman
 - Industrious
 - Made money
 - Prominent in the city
- Women of Hebrews 11:35-40—See above too.

Application:

Same as last week.

1. False teaching must be strongly addressed. We are to teach sound, healthy doctrine.
2. Women can speak, teach, and lead.
3. Women should learn.
4. We should think and study deeply on this issue.
 - a. Where might the Enemy (Satan) seek to get a foothold in our church on this topic.
 - b. *I Suffer Not a Woman: Rethinking 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in Light of Ancient Evidence* by Richard Clark Kroeger and Catherine Clark Kroeger
 - c. *Slaves, Women & Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis* by William J. Webb
 - d. *Paul Through Mediterranean Eyes: Cultural Studies in 1 Corinthians* by Kenneth E. Bailey
5. We need to grow in relating as brethren and sistren in Christ.

Q&A

Pray

1 Timothy 3:14-16 NEXT WEEK with discussion about Tallgrass Church Membership!

Have someone pray.

Chopping Block:

Quotes from *I Suffer Not a Woman: Rethinking 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in Light of Ancient Evidence* by Richard Clark Kroeger and Catherine Clark Kroeger

- “If there is one verse in the Bible more than any other which is used to disbar women from proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ and exercising their talents for his glory, it is 1 Timothy 2:12.” (pp. 11-12)
- “In this book, we shall suggest that 1 Timothy 2:11-15 is not a decree of timeless and universal restriction and punishment but a corrective: a specific direction as to what women should not teach and why.” (p. 23)
- “How can Christ’s followers pray this (Matthew 9:36-38) sincerely when they are at the same time doing their best to deter half of those laborers?” (p. 24)
- “Our conception of First Timothy is usually based upon the presupposition that it was written as a manual on ecclesiastical government for a church not much different from our own. The reality may come as a distinct surprise. The letter is addressed to a church in turmoil, threatened by heresy in its midst and fraught with bitter disputes over matters of faith and practice. That church was in dire need of practical and spiritual direction.” (p. 43)
- “...dominant theme of First Timothy: how does a new church deal with members immersed in false doctrine and in misbehavior justified by muddled theology?” (p. 46)
- “Ephesus stood as a bastion of feminine supremacy in religion. William M. Ramsay insists that it was no coincidence that the virgin Mary was first given the official title *theotokos*, bearer of God, at Ephesus, where Artemis herself had earlier borne the same title.” (p. 54)
- “Which meaning we should select for the best rendering of *authentēin* in 1 Timothy 2:12 is not a conclusion easily reached.” (p. 87)
- “Translation is not an exact science. One has only to compare different translations of the Bible to see that at some points the sense has been understood differently. Competent scholars may render a given text by a variety of expressions, and each in its own way may be correct. Many Greek words have more than one meaning, and the translator’s task is to choose the expression which in her or his understanding is most congruent with the sense of the entire passage and best fits the context.” (p. 87)
- “The Scriptures themselves, as well as the vigorous leadership provided by the women of Asia Minor in the first few centuries of the church, cause us to question the traditional interpretation. A prohibition against women assuming positions of authority is inconsistent with the strong evidence demonstrating that in the early Christian communities women were most certainly engaged in leadership. Presumably they did not consider this Scripture to be a deterrent. How, then, might they have understood it?” (p. 92)
- “The Amazons, according to Ramsay, belonged to an ‘old religion’ in which women ruled and assigned to men traditionally feminine roles.” (p. 93)
- “Such a pagan element, based upon sex hostility and reversal of gender roles, may well have found a place in a cult practice among the dissidents in the congregation of Ephesus. The apostle who taught that in Jesus there is neither male nor female would surely have condemned it. If this is the case, the condemnation is not directed against women participating in leadership but rather against a monopoly on religious power by women. Such a monopolistic attitude in the church is wrong, whether arrogated to themselves by men or women.” (p. 93)
- “Gnostics too introduced initiates to divine knowledge (*gnōsis*) through sexual activity. They were keenly aware that the biblical term *to know* was a euphemism for intercourse.” (p. 98)
- “The related adjective, *authentikos*, like the English ‘authentic,’ means something original or genuine.” (p. 99)
- “In early Christian writings, God is called the architect and builder (*authéntēs*) of a tower. In a second century C.E. Christian novel, the term is used for ‘the sole creator.’” (p. 100)
- “*Authentēin*, when used with the genitive, as it is in 1 Timothy 2:12, could imply not only to claim sovereignty but also to claim authorship.” (p. 102)

- “Then the thought might flow thus: I do not permit woman to teach nor to represent herself as originator of man but she is to be in conformity [with the Scriptures] [or that she keeps it a secret.] For Adam was created first, then Eve.” (p. 103)
- “‘To be in silence’ can mean ‘to keep something a secret.’ Secret knowledge was an important part of ancient mystery religion and of Gnosticism. There was a Gnostic notion of Eve as creator of Adam, which was part of the ‘secret knowledge’ that was available to adherents. Other people were not let in on the secret.” (p. 103)
- “The word *hesuchia*, however, can also mean “peace” or “harmony” (see also 1 Thess. 4:11; 2 Thess. 3:12; 1 Tim. 2:2). This, we believe, is the preferred translation here for the term. Just as the writer asked that women learn in conformity to the Word of God, he now asks that they express their views in harmony with the revelation of the Scriptures: in this case, that woman did *not* create man nor did Eve bring spiritual illumination to Adam.” (p. 103)
- “Throughout the Pastorals, the Word of God is represented as the antidote for false teaching. The women needed to make sure that both their study and their instructing accorded with sacred writ. They should cease from promulgating a deviant doctrine and bring themselves into accord with God’s Word.” (p. 104)
- “While Artemis held sway in the great temple, Cybele maintained her stronghold on the mountain overlooking the shrine.” (p. 108)
- “The Lycians, like the legendary Amazons, claimed their descent from their mothers rather than their fathers.” (p. 109)
- “We suggest that the writer of the Pastorals was opposing a doctrine which acclaimed motherhood as the ultimate reality. Our Bible maintains that God, who far transcends all limitations of gender, created the heavens and the earth, and that all things are of God.” (p. 112)
- “Didymus the Blind, a late-fourth-century biblical commentator, seems to have understood 1 Timothy 2:12 as focusing on the concept of man as source of women. (In Greek, unlike English, the word for ‘head’ was ordinarily used in a metaphorical sense to mean ‘source’ rather than ‘authority.’)” (p. 112)
- “If 1 Timothy 2:12 is translated as prohibiting women from claiming the power of origin, it fits with the refutation which follows. Women are forbidden to teach that female activity brought man into existence because, according to the Scriptures, Adam was created first. Eve, for all her desire to bring enlightenment did not bring gnosis but transgression.” (p. 113)
- “This would gainsay the tenet held by some Gnostics that certain women had a special revelation. Such an interpretation harmonizes with other instances where Paul first indicates a heresy and then refutes it: 1 Corinthians 15:12-57; 2 Timothy 2:17-19; 1 Timothy 4:3-5; and Romans 3:8.” (p. 113)
- “We suggest that these verses are not intended as the rationale for prohibiting a gospel ministry for women, but rather they constitute a refutation of a widespread heresy. Specifically, we consider this to be directed against Gnostic or proto-Gnostic mythology glorifying Eve. We have already mentioned the preoccupation of the false teachers with stories which they distorted.” (p. 117)
- “Ialdabaoth, as the god of Genesis 1-3 is sometimes called, is one of the lower powers. He creates the physical world, and that is a grievous mistake. According to the Gnostic view, the material universe is evil, manufactured by a third-rate spiritual being. Thus the God of the Old Testament comes off very badly indeed, both for his creation of a world composed of matter and for his view that he is the supreme sovereign. Ialdabaoth is so blind that he does not even know of the existence of the higher powers.” (p. 118)
- “When Adam and Eve are placed in the Garden of Eden, they believe that Ialdabaoth is the supreme deity. Here Satan, another of the powers, appears as a great benefactor. He realized that Adam and Eve, caught in the deception perpetrated by Ialdabaoth, have no knowledge of the Supreme Being of the universe. They cannot attain to him because they do not even know of his existence. Their problem is lack of knowledge, and yet they have been forbidden to eat of the tree of knowledge. Assuming the form of a serpent, Satan communicates this wonderful *gnōsis*, or knowledge, to Eve, who then snares it with Adam. The two of them can now seek the Supreme Being who is far above the material world, seek to rise above the earth to his abode in pure spirituality, and seek to escape the unfortunate influence of Ialdabaoth.” (p. 118)