

Daily Prayer

TUESDAY, JULY 14

Today's prayer is based on I Timothy 2.9-15, ESV.

Heavenly Father,

Lord, help me slice through all the confusion and contentious arguing
that this next counsel from Paul continues to stir up.

Again, help me see the *heart* of the matter.

Paul has just expressed *that* men should pray
and that the *manner* of their praying should be
with lifted holy hands and
without anger or quarreling.

likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel,

Thank you that we already know from Paul's letter to Corinth
that women *did* pray in church,
that he is not prohibiting them from praying,
that that is *understood*,

that he is now addressing the ladies' *manner* of praying.

In the same way that the mens' *lives* should be consistent with *their* praying -
so also the *women's* lives should be consistent with *their* praying.

In our day, just as in Paul's, the way we present ourselves to the general public
says much about what is going on in our hearts.

Women - and men - have *always* known how to dress to attract,
and Paul is telling us that reverence for the Most High
should trump mate-hunting when we go to church.

with modesty and self-control,

These are clearly heart issues -
how is my modesty?
how is my self-control?

These are definitely trans-gender issues as well.

Who dares approach the living God without modesty?

Who rushes into his presence and pitches a fit?

not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire,

Lord, I take from this that *any* member of the body of Christ
with significant means should never flaunt it
before other believers of less means.

And we certainly should think twice before we enter church for worship
with our minds on sexual conquest, male or female.

but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works.

Lord, help me to see the many, many things that you point to in your Word
that are really good things to do.

Lord, let the desire to do good things originate from my heart
as it is purified by faith,
responds to your Word and
attempts the thing for your glory,
realizing that, even though it still be lacking,
Jesus will supply whatever is needed.

Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness.

Lord, we already know that all believers are to submit to all other believers
out of reverence for Christ - Paul wrote that in his letter to the Ephesians.

Lord, make me a quiet and submissive learner of your way.

Quieten my rebellious heart - help me submit to your truth.

I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man;

Lord, I know this was Paul's practice in his circumstances in his time,
steering difficult passage through Jewish and Gentile cultures.

Help me to see what his practice might be were he here today.

rather, she is to remain quiet.

Being quiet seems to be a recurring theme.

Father, keep me quiet when I find myself giving voice to opinions
that are entirely mine - not yours.

For Adam was formed first, then Eve;

Lord, this seems to be a matter of who was made first -

and Adam was not deceived,

and Adam is clearly said *not* to have been deceived -

but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.

Eve was deceived, however - and Adam followed her lead.

Lord, my question for you is:

how is being *un*-deceived and transgressing your will

better than *being deceived* and transgressing your will?

It seems to me that you would rather we were *not* deceived

and that we continued in your will.

Father, everyone I know, male or female,

is deceived about one point or another right now.

I have a hard time believing one gender is more prone to deceit than another.

I think we are all pretty desperately deceitful.

No matter how I slice this - it remains a mess -

and I must confess that it closely resembles the world

I have been living in all these years.

Yet she will be saved through childbearing—

Lord, I see multiple plausible ways of understanding this -

let me just praise and thank you for perpetuating the race

and redeeming your people.

if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control.

Again, Lord, in this gracious statement of your provision for women

let me not miss that no man can, with impunity,

ignore faith, love, holiness and self-control.

These seem to be the bedrock deal makers or breakers.

Please, Father, build faith, love, holiness and self-control into me,

for Jesus and His kingdom's sake. Amen.

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Christians cannot leave the church and live on their own, as if nobody else is good enough for them.

Augustine

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