

## **Lesson 2: Samples of the People's Bible**

**People's Bible: 1,2 Timothy and Titus** by Armin Schuetze, Northwestern Publishing House (p. 40-42)

### **A word to the women**

I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God.

Having addressed the men, Paul similarly now addresses the women. Again as herald and apostle he is speaking not only what he “wants” but what God wants.

Paul wants Christian women to know what truly makes them beautiful in the eyes of God and of their fellow Christians. How one dresses may reveal what one thinks, what is

important in life, what is in the heart. “To dress modestly, with decency and propriety” does not call for clothing that is unattractive, drab, uncomely, or an appearance that is slovenly and unkempt. Rather, it speaks of a sense of what is proper and in good taste. It shows good judgment, recognizing what is decent and proper according to God’s standards. Thus it can give evidence of a heart in which Christ dwells by faith.

On the other hand, hair “braided” in a way to attract undue attention, striking golden jewelry and pearls, and expensive clothes that make a show of riches may tell the observer about a woman’s vanity and a preoccupation with displaying and making a show of her physical beauty. It may reveal a heart that is centered on self and wealth.

Christian women are to adorn themselves “with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God.” Their beauty is not simply external but a beauty of the heart that expresses itself in doing works that are pleasing to God.

Peter, addressing Christian wives, similarly describes their true beauty: “Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful” (1 Peter 3:3-5). Peter referred to the example of Sarah. Paul could have cited examples like Lydia (Acts 16:14,15), Phoebe and Priscilla (Romans 16:1-4), and many others. Proverbs 31:10-31 gives a comprehensive description of a “wife of noble character.” Also today Christian women will seek to appear truly beautiful in a way that far surpasses mere external beauty as they live lives of faith, love, and service that reveal their true inner self.

11A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. 12I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent. 13For Adam was formed first, then Eve. 14And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. 15But women will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.

Paul looks at a teaching-learning situation. Since Christians have been instructed to teach “everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:20), there will be many such situations in the church and among Christians. “A woman should learn in quietness and full submission.” In speaking of submission, Paul is applying a general principle regarding the relation of man and woman to the specific teaching-learning situation. He presents the principle and its divine origin in the verses that follow.

“I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent.” Here Paul states the principle and makes an application. The application is that a woman is not to teach; she must be silent. The principle is that a woman is not “to have authority over a man.” Paul is not setting up a rule or law that prohibits all teaching by women. The concern is that she not teach when her teaching violates the “authority” principle.