

## Small Group Guide WHAT ABOUT WOMEN, PAUL?

The Church at Brook Hills

Dr. David Platt

September 4, 2011

1 Timothy 2:8–15

This guide is a tool to help you lead your group into spiritual transformation. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering, owning, and applying the truths of God's Word. There may be aspects you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on an aspect of their relationship with God. Your role is to help facilitate this encounter with God in His Word through His Body, not just to complete the guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid group task list.

### **Relate . . .**

Begin your group time by engaging in relational conversations and prayer that may include the following elements:

**Welcome**—a simple, brief time to greet one another (especially new friends), enjoy refreshments, and make announcements.

**Review**—a time to review the truths discussed last week and report on how members have had success or frustrations in applying those truths during the week. The leader will want to provide encouragement and shepherding during this time. Periodically, the leader will also want to review the gospel and allow members to share reports about opportunities they've had to share the gospel. Occasionally, the leader will want to revisit the vision for the group and discuss ways to accomplish that vision better.

**Prayer**—a time of general prayer with the whole group praying for struggles regarding the application of truths, for those with whom the group is sharing the gospel, and for understanding of today's truths.

### **Reflect . . .**

Use the following summary and questions to review this week's message and reflect on its implications in our lives:

#### **Sermon Outline**

### WHAT ABOUT WOMEN, PAUL? 1 Timothy 2:8-15

#### To Divisive Men In The Church...

- Pray with           purity           before God.
- Pray with           peace           before others.

#### To Distractive Women In The Church...

- Adorn yourself with           modest           dress.
  - Do not draw attention to physical           beauty          .
  - Do not draw attention to worldly           wealth          .
- Adore God through a           Christlike           demeanor.

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#### On The Distinct Roles Of Men And Women In The Church...

- Two principles...
  - The principle of harmony: We interpret *each* Scripture in light of *all* Scripture.
  - The principle of history: God has revealed Scriptural truth in the context of *specific* historical and cultural settings.
    - What part of the text is cultural expression (which changes)?
    - What part of the text is central revelation (which never changes)?
- Two reminders...
  - God created men and women with equal dignity.
  - God created men and women with complementary roles.
    - In the home.
    - In the church.
- Two prohibitions...
  - Women should not teach as elders/pastors/overseers in the church.
    - Women listen willingly to the biblical instruction of elders.
    - Women should teach in various settings of the church in accord with elder instruction.
  - Women should not lead as elders/pastors/overseers in the church.
    - Women submit gladly to the servant leadership of elders.
    - Women should lead in various positions of the church under the authority of elder leadership.
- Two questions...
  - As a woman teaches/leads, is she reflecting God's pattern in Scripture?
  - As a woman teaches/leads, is she reinforcing God's priorities in the home?
- Two reasons...
  - God's design in creation: God gives authority to man.
  - Satan's distortion of creation: man abdicates authority to woman.
- Two things we don't know for sure...
  - Is 1 Timothy 2:15 talking about salvation through the offspring of Eve?
  - Is 1 Timothy 2:15 talking about the significance of women nurturing children?
- Two things we do know for sure...
  - Women are sanctified as they glorify God in the distinct roles and responsibilities He has entrusted to them.
  - Women are saved not through the birth of a child, but through the death of Christ.
    - He died to make us the men and women God created us to be.

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#### Message Summary

*All Scripture must be interpreted in harmony with the rest of Scripture. Scripture must also be understood in the context of specific historical and cultural settings. Some parts of some texts may be tied to cultural expression, while others are central revelation (never changing).*

*Men in the church must not continue in deliberate sin nor be divisive but should pray with purity before God and at peace with others. Women in the church must dress modestly—not drawing attention to themselves, but rather drawing attention to God through their good works.*

*While men and women are created with equal worth and dignity, they do have complementary roles. God has given authority to man, but Satan tries to distort this by tempting man to abdicate his authority. Women should not teach or lead as elders/pastors/overseers in the church. There are nonetheless many ways in which women should teach and lead in the church, in accord with, in glad submission to, and under the authority of the elders. As women teach and lead, it is important to ask if she is reflecting God's pattern as laid out in Scripture and if she is reinforcing God's priorities in the home.*

*First Timothy 2:15 is difficult to interpret. It may reference the importance of childbearing—obviously something only women can do—or it could have to do with salvation through Christ's birth by a daughter of Eve. In any case, women glorify God by serving in the roles He has entrusted to them. Both men and women are saved through the death of Christ.*

#### Discuss

Use the following questions to review the Head (What does God want me to know?), Heart (What does God want me to value?), and Hands (What does God want me to do?) aspects of the message.

- Read 1 Timothy 2:8. What are the biblical remedies to division and quarreling? How does this passage of Scripture emphasize the importance of purity in action and doctrine? Do we sometimes presume upon God by thinking that He will accept our worship despite sin and anger in our lives? How can we deal with that temptation?
- Read 1 Timothy 2:9–10. Try to define *modesty* in spiritual terms. Why are we called not to draw attention to physical beauty or material wealth in the church? How does Matthew 5:16 describe the kind of adornment women (and men) should be concerned about?
- What kinds of questions should women (and men) ask as they choose their clothing, on Sundays and every day? What are common temptations in our culture regarding physical beauty and wealth that we must choose to resist? How should men, women, and children prepare themselves for worship?
- What is the heart change God desires in terms of modesty? Why is legalism regarding clothing not the biblical solution?
- What are two principles we must employ when interpreting Scripture?
- Why can we interpret Scripture based on Scripture? How does interpreting Scripture based on Scripture answer many of our application questions? In our culture, is there a temptation to doubt that Scripture is adequate or accurate and then to seek answers in other places? How can we combat that tendency?
- If some parts of some texts are tied to cultural expression and other parts are unchanging central revelation, how can we tell the difference? How is this principle of interpretation often abused in our culture and even by some in the church? How can being connected to and in submission to a church body (membership) help us rightly interpret Scripture?
- What is the unchanging principle behind 1 Timothy 2:9–12? What part of the passage is open to cultural interpretation (in terms of practical application)? Why do we not forbid braided hair in our context? Why do we know that Paul is not saying women should be silent at all times when the church is gathered?
- Read 1 Timothy 2:12–14. What is the role of an elder? Why should women not serve as elders in the church? How are all church members called to be in submission to the elders?
- Why should women have other teaching roles in various settings of the church? What kinds of roles are included? (See Titus 2:3–5, Matthew 28:18–20, and 2 Timothy 1:5 as examples.) If there are situations in which it is not clear whether it is appropriate for a woman to teach, what are some questions that can be asked to guide our decision-making?
- Read 1 Timothy 2:15. What are two possible interpretations? Regardless, how are both men and women going to be saved?

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- This week, how will you choose to follow God's Word rather than the culture's assumptions? What changes might be necessary for you to serve as the man or woman God intended you to be? What role is God calling you to play in His church?

### **Respond . . .**

*Encourage your group to break out into smaller, same-gender groups where they will respond to the truths of the message. These groups will share with one another based on the following questions and then close in prayer:*

- What are some of the main truths that God wants you to know from the message?
- How do your thoughts need to adjust to align with these truths?
- According to the truths from the message, what does God want you to value?
- How do your values need to change to align with His values?
- What actions does God want you to take according to the truths of this message?
- What is an action that you can start to implement today or tomorrow?

Close this time by praying for each other, specifically for strength in the application of these truths and for the lost people with whom you are seeking to share the gospel.

### **Weekly Prayer Focus ...**

- **Lives and Church:** *Take this week to celebrate God's design for His Church for men and women. Pray for the women in our church, that they will embrace the biblical portrait of womanhood offered to them with great joy and that through this obedience our church will flourish in purity and unity.*
- **Local:** *This week we are praying for the Mom Time Ministry at Brook Hills that allows moms to connect for biblical teaching, community, and mentoring support. We are also praying for New Hope Baptist, Gregory L. Clarke, pastor.*
- **Global:** *This week we are praying for our partners, the Preedy family, serving in India. We are also praying for Brook Hills short-term teams serving in Thailand and Southeast Asia.*