



CHRISTIAN FAITH PERSPECTIVES IN  
LEADERSHIP AND BUSINESS

# Women in Leadership

*Biblical and Contemporary  
Perspectives*

—  
*Edited by*

STEFANIE ERTEL

DORIS GOMEZ

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# Christian Faith Perspectives in Leadership and Business

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Stefanie Ertel · Doris Gomez ·  
Kathleen Patterson  
Editors

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# Introduction

*Stefanie Ertel, Carlo Serrano, and Steven Crowther*

## 1.1 HISTORY

I grew up in a traditional household as a non-denominational pastor's daughter (Ertel). I have three older brothers, and my dad pastored a small church in South Florida. At that time, our family did not believe it was biblical to have female pastors. Instead, we believed women could teach and lead at various levels in the business world and within the church if she was not a pastor or had governmental-level leadership in the local church.

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Steven Crowther: Deceased

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My dad was one of my biggest encouragers while I stepped more into leadership. As I developed in this area, and my dad's experience and knowledge grew in women and leadership, his views developed and changed due to his deep study of the biblical narrative of women. However, I remember growing up in a great household, yet at times, feeling less because of the restrictions placed on me due to my gender. I acknowledged the differences in biological gender and the roles of a husband and wife communicated in the Bible. However, I was confused about women in the Bible, women in leadership today, successful women pastors, and where God had placed me in leadership. I would like to believe the many conversations I had with my dad played a part in his pursuit of a deeper exploration of this topic. God used my dad, Dr. Steven Crowther, to play a significant part in getting where I am today, encouraging me as a leader, and helping me lay the foundations for starting this book; he contributed to this chapter and this book shortly before his passing and has left an indelible mark on me and many other women in leadership.

My dad connected me to the appropriate people and helped me during the first two years of the process of this book. We often talked about the day we would write and publish a book together. Unfortunately, he unexpectedly passed of cancer four months before the contract was officially accepted with Palgrave Macmillan. Many of the authors in this book knew him personally or knew of him professionally, and his work is cited throughout the following chapters. I am honored to continue in this process. This book is about honoring God and revealing the truth from His Word about His daughters.

As we step into this research process together, I would like to highlight a quote from a previously written book by my dad, also published by Palgrave Macmillan. Crowther (2018) wrote a book on biblical servant leadership and explores how this approach applies in current contexts. His research is beneficial to consider in light of the research within this book. *Women in Leadership: Biblical and Contemporary Perspectives* delves into a needed topic, but let one's focus not be diverted. This research

should bring forth needed knowledge and empower women to lead, not divert and cause distractions by embracing the negatives. Crowther writes (2018),

The way into the future for the human race is effective good leadership. Our world is filled with divergent troubling issues and many of the solutions need effective, good leaders with a robust way of leading. Looking into the future, which can appear dark at times, is actually very bright. It is an opportunity for new ways of leading with new effective, good leaders to be developed and to rally many of the new effective leaders of the world to bring bright change into our world. In the church, there is a bright future. As the church faces opposition and trouble and even cultural rejection, this is an opportunity for good effective biblical leaders to rise to the surface in the church and ministries to lead in real advance for the Kingdom of God on the earth. These are dark times, these are good times. Frankly, these times inspire me and they should inspire you too (pp. 164–165).

The future is bright within the Church, and the future is bright for women leaders inside and outside the Church. Let us continue to climb upon the shoulders of previous researchers, leaders, and men and women world changers.

## 1.2 HIGH-CAPACITY LEADERS

The world needs high-capacity leaders who serve from a foundation of ethical and moral values. Thus, it is important for Christian scholars to continue to explore the nexus of organizational leadership and biblical principles. This is especially true when exploring the role of women in leadership, specifically in the business context. Women are already leading around the globe at the highest levels. In mainstream society, women are empowered more than ever to stand up against injustice, thrive, and fulfill their unique calling. Yet, within some organizational contexts, the issue of women in leadership remains unexplored at best and controversial at worst, wherein women in leadership are still considered anomalies in high positions of leadership (Chin, 2011). Some argue that women are allowed to teach within their homes, but they should never teach or lead in an ecclesial context (Grudem & Piper, 2012; MacArthur, 2009; Pawson, 2009; Smith, 2012). Others suggest women have equal access



to leadership roles within a local church due to the egalitarian descriptions found in certain biblical passages (Lee, 2021; Stackhouse, 2015; Gal. 3:23–29). A major database search of the phrase “biblical women in leadership” yielded over 9800 unique peer-reviewed publications on the subject. Indeed, much has been written on the subject of women in ecclesial leadership (de la Rey, 2005; Klenke, 2004; Rhode, 2017). Yet, what is often lost within the literature is a biblical perspective on the role of women in leadership from a macro level.

It is important to consider the role and value of women in leadership across all social sectors. Indeed, there are numerous examples in the Scriptures of women leading outside of the local church context. In the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, women are shown leading at the national level (Judges 4:4–14), on the front-lines of organizational life (Luke 8:1–3; Acts 18:18–19; Romans 16:1–5), and of course, leading at home (I Timothy 5:14; Titus 2:4). Thus, it is important to explore the issue of women in leadership from a biblical perspective with application for business and executive leadership as well as within ecclesial settings. This book is not a call to the revolution of past or present movements that fight for women’s rights in all areas. Those movements are important and need exploration from the view of Scripture. However, this book is a much-needed biblically based and research-centered exploration of women’s unique and important role in leadership across multiple domains, especially within organizational contexts beyond the local church. This biblical and researched understanding develops a strong foundation for women leaders to lead with confidence by removing gender role confusion and allowing for context to empower women to lead.

### 1.3 EXPECTATIONS

The following chapters contain research and truth that can, and hopefully will, contribute to today’s leadership movement: effective, high-capacity leaders of all genders advancing the Kingdom of God, no matter the environment, career, or calling. Jesus valued women from various backgrounds and ethnicities in a day that emphasized these areas significantly. According to McLaughlin (2019), “Jesus’s valuing of women is unmissable. In a culture in which women were devalued and often exploited, it underscores their equal status before God and his desire for personal relationship with them” (chap. 8, para. 26). Let us continue to train

and empower leaders, both male and female. In today’s culture, undervaluing women may still be present in some environments and cultures, but let us follow this example of Jesus elevating women by allowing their perspectives to be heard.

This book was designed to empower women and go deeper into this topic for graduate-level research to equip current and future leaders with the appropriate knowledge to move forward, leading both men and women. The following chapters will focus on areas throughout the Bible focusing on women, what the Bible says about them, and how this is acted out in contemporary environments. It is critical to look at the many verses in the Bible and the examples of women leaders. This book was written with the view that the entire Bible is the inspired Word of God, final in its content, containing no errors within its teaching (2 Tim. 3:16). This belief significantly impacts every chapter within this book. This may not be the book for you if you do not have this belief. However, if you believe in the inerrancy of Scripture and want to study, research, and know more about what God has communicated about women, this book is for you. I encourage you to step into this journey with an open mind asking the Holy Spirit to guide you. Hard questions will be asked, but one should not shy away from difficult topics. We, the Church (body of believers), have been empowered by the Holy Spirit to do more than we ever could on our own. Part of this may start with asking the question, “why?” Why did Jesus treat women as He did at that time? Why were there women leaders in the Church in the Bible, while some today are explicitly against most forms of women in leadership? Join us and ask the question “*why*” –while looking deeper into Scripture, culture, and context, how the Church is acting this out, and what God is challenging us to do today with this knowledge.

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# Women in Leadership: Examining the Biblical Text and the Context

*Stefanie Ertel*

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Men and women of all nationalities are in leadership roles across the globe. In the past, there have been stigmas about individuals in leadership due to their gender or race. Even though many can identify diversity in senior leadership roles in the United States, there is still an identifiable minority in these positions across organizations. In some countries, racial, class, or gender minorities are not treated equally in their workplaces. Currently, some cultures still treat women as weak workmates. As time has progressed, minorities have been increasingly promoted in the workplace, to the point of purposeful hiring of minorities to increase an organization's level of diversity. The world has given more acceptance to

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women in leadership roles than the church typically does. Both men and women have their strengths and weaknesses, but is one called to leadership, and more specifically to full-time vocational ministry in the church, where another is not? What does the Bible say about women in leadership? What aspects were cultural, and what truths live on beyond that time and culture?

The business world is searching for exceptional women for employment, leadership, and executive leadership positions. They have learned that the leadership style of most women complements an unstable, diverse environment (Daft, 2011). The church does not necessarily have the same viewpoint. As a result, much controversy among Christians has arisen concerning whether women can be leaders, specifically regarding church leadership.

Much of this discussion focuses on 1 Timothy 2:11–15, which states women cannot teach nor have authority over men. Various denominations have differing views of the interpretation of this passage, as well as Bible scholars. Nevertheless, the interpretation of these verses are essential for women, especially those who are leading in the church. Thus, the following study will explore the topic of the biblical teaching concerning women in leadership while focusing on this passage in 1 Timothy 2. There will be a focus on interpretation, context, and application for today.

Throughout the Bible, there may seem to be inconsistencies concerning women and leadership. Therefore, this is a cry for a deeper study! This study began many years ago with the thought that God does not contradict Himself, and there appears to be a contradiction in the Bible on the topic of women and leadership. How could Deborah lead the nation of Israel but not have authority over men? God does not contradict Himself, and He is a God of details. Every Word in the Bible is inspired. With this belief, if an area contradicts another part of Scripture, we are missing the deeper details.

## 2.2 THE TEXT WITHIN THE CONTEXT

When exegeting Scripture (expounding on and interpreting Scripture), it is essential to allow Scripture to interpret Scripture (Gentry & Wellum, 2012; Hahn & Scott, 2011; Rice, 2009). When a passage seems contradictory to other passages in the Bible, it is vital to identify the context of the verse. The following research builds off the truth that the Bible is the written Word of God—“inspired by God” (NASB) and “breathed out by

God” (ESV). 2 Timothy 3:16 (ESV) says, “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.” God cannot and will not contradict Himself, and He does not contradict Himself in His written Word.

One argument states that God should only give a command once for His children to follow. If the only view in the Bible concerning women and teaching and having authority over men were the same, it would be a valid argument to state that women should not teach or have authority over men. However, since this is not the case, the following will identify the context of the 2 Timothy passage in the Bible concerning women in leadership. According to Witherington (2006), “Unless the text is studied in its historical literacy, rhetorical, religious, etc. contexts, we are bound to distort its meaning and misuse it. A text without a context is just a pretext for whatever you want it to mean” (para. 5). Therefore, one should not start with an idea and try to prove it through Scripture, but rather look at Scripture and ask, what is the idea God is communicating here? Therefore, the following will delve into one of the most controversial verses and topics in the Bible among Christians, considering the text within the context.

- 1 Timothy 2:11–12

- A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet (NASB).
- Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet (ESV).
- A woman\* should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman\* to teach or to assume authority over a man\*\*, she must be quiet (NIV).

*\*or wife; \*\*or husband*

*The above versions used were chosen since NASB and ESV are word-for-word (literal translations), and the NIV is a blend of word-for-word and thought-for-thought.*

1 Timothy 2:11–12 has been used to support the idea that women should not have authority over men, particularly within a church or spiritual setting. To some, this means that women cannot preach from the

stage because this could demonstrate authority over men. According to Witherington (2006), this passage does not state that women must be completely silent. It does not command women to be subordinate to all men; it simply states in this passage to listen quietly and intently to learn. This verse tells women to respect those giving instruction, just as one would expect most individuals to do today when receiving instruction. The focus of this verse is how women ought to learn. Paul gives this command to the women within this local body, but this same command is for men in various other passages. 1 Timothy 2:1–2 (ESV) says, “First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.” That last phrase in the NIV and NASB state, “that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness” (NIV), and “so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity” (NASB). According to Cobrae (2007), one can identify the word used for peaceable (or peaceful in the ESV and NIV), which is the identical word for silence (or quietly in the NASB and ESV). According to Strong’s definition, “it is the same word; but in the feminine form of the Greek word *hesuchios* which means to be still and at peace” (Cobrae, 2007, p. 9). According to Witherington (2006), men are encouraged to exhibit quietness in worship in Titus 2:2, 1 Thessalonians 4:11, 2 Thessalonians 3:12, and more. This passage deals explicitly with women due to the context of the situation, specifically addressing the problems within this church, addressing the women who were misbehaving (Harrison, 2011).

Early Church leaders included Phoebe, Priscilla, Euodia, and Syntyche, all women who functioned in the Church in ways that may seem contrary to the passage in 1 Timothy (Harrison, 2011). When highlighting such women in leadership in the Bible, Davis (2009) writes, “there is no hint in the canonical texts that the activities of these women were viewed in a negative light. This diversity—the fact that women’s authoritative leadership is sometimes prohibited (1 Tim 2) and sometimes permitted (Deborah, Judg. 4)—indicates that circumstantial factors are in play, not merely ‘transcultural, creational’ norms that are applied without regard to local problems” (The question of homosexual practices section, para. 3). If Paul was not addressing a problem within the church and it was a command for all women, then several early Church leaders went against this command by supporting women in leadership. However, if Paul were addressing a problem within that church with the women, the

other passages in the Bible supporting women leaders would not be in contradiction to this passage.

Examples of women in leadership roles are throughout the Bible. They are less prevalent than in men, but there are a few reasons for this. Two significant reasons for this include that patriarchal thinking dominated the culture of Bible times, and prominent leadership characteristics of that time were more typically related to men. Even more recently, one can identify similar parallels with the belief that most leadership characteristics were more notably masculine. Northouse (2019) identifies the rise of “great man” theories in the early twentieth century. According to Daft (2011), “The earliest studies of leadership adopted the belief that leaders (who were always thought of as male) were born with certain heroic leadership traits and natural abilities of power and influence. In organizations, social movements, religions, governments, and the military, leadership was conceptualized as a single ‘Great Man’ who put everything together and influenced others to follow along based on the strength of inherited traits, qualities, and abilities” (p. 19). As leadership theories have continued to develop throughout time, scholars and practitioners agree that this approach to leadership has more weaknesses than strengths. It is noteworthy to identify that this idea that men are leaders and women are not continued significantly longer after Bible times. Currently, some cultures and denominations continue to have this view.

Huizing (2011) identifies the commands in 1 Timothy 2 as not prescriptive. Looking at the verses directly preceding 1 Timothy 2:11–12 many scholars believe, including Huizing (2011), these are not literal commands for current contexts. Many scholars and leaders within the Church agree that Paul’s purpose in this passage is to address specific problems, not to add to the Church’s doctrine (Harrison, 2011; Huizing, 2011). 1 Timothy 2:8–9 commands men to lift their hands whenever they pray (verse eight) and women not to wear nice clothes or jewelry (verse nine).

The imperative in this passage is to learn; this command was noteworthy during this time due to the cultural elements at play (Huizing, 2011). It was prohibited in Jewish traditions to teach women about the Torah, and this passage commands women to be taught (Witherington, 2006). Thus, this passage allows more opportunities for women by allowing them to learn. As one considers the context, we see an elevation of women in their current roles, even during a time of rebuke.



Another reason this passage of Scripture can be challenging to translate is due to a Greek word that is only used here in Scripture (Gundry & Meadors, 2009). This word (authentēō) translates as “to exercise authority,” which is an essential element of the translation for this passage (Gundry & Meadors, 2009). Thayer’s Greek Lexicon defines this word from 1 Timothy 2:12 as, “one who with his own hand kills either others or himself...one who does a thing himself, the author...one who acts on his own authority, autocratic...an absolute master...to govern one, exercise dominion over one” (G831—authentēō—Strong’s Greek Lexicon). The word authority is present throughout 1 Timothy and the Bible. It is interesting to note how the word used in this passage differs from all the others in Scripture. However, the word authentēō is in Greek literature (Gundry & Meadors, 2009). This term may have negative meanings (to intend with harm or to have dominion over), yet, this word links with the word teach, and when they are linked together, they must both be positive or negative (Grudem, 2006; Gundry & Meadors, 2009). Here the word teach is used in a positive, and thus the word authority does not have a negative connotation (Grudem, 2006; Gundry & Meadors, 2009). Witherington (2006) argues that the focus is not on the word ‘teach’ and whether it has a negative sense. Instead, the focus is on the context, which deals with correcting problems and is, therefore, a negative context, which would change the meaning of this word to the negative translation, as seen in the Greek Lexicon above.

Dr. Davis (2009) additionally researched this word used in Greek and emphasized how Paul had many other commonly used words (even from Paul’s writings) that would have been more straightforward in the meaning if the intent was ‘authority’ in 1 Timothy 2. Davis (2009) writes, “The fact that a highly unusual and ambiguous word is chosen in 2:12 would be consistent with an unusual set of circumstances in the context to which the text is addressed. It will be argued below that these circumstances, as indicated by clear references in the Pastoral Epistles themselves, involve women who are being deceived by false teachers and, as such, are not suitable for the exercise of teaching or ruling authority in Ephesus” (*Authentein*: “have authority” or “domineer”? section, para. 4). Additionally, Witherington expounds on this topic as well. He describes this command in the present continual sense; Witherington (2010) writes, “The verb here, epitrepō, is present continual sense. Paul does not say, ‘I will not/never permit,’ but rather, ‘I am not [now] permitting.’ As

Phillip Payne has pointed out, there are no examples in the New Testament or in the LXX where this verb in the present active indicative first person singular indicates or implies a perpetual ordinance; rather a timely and specific prohibition is in view” (pp. 226–227; Payne, 1981). It can be concluded from the previously supported research that the command given in 1 Timothy 2 to women was due to the issues within the local body. Even though some may argue that the word translated for women could have been wives (as seen referenced in the NIV version), with these circumstances and the specific tenses with the words used, the meaning for the current application does not change. It is still evident; this was not a command for all time.

- 1 Timothy 2:13–15

- For *it was* Adam *who* was first created, *and* then Eve. And *it was* not Adam *who* was deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a wrongdoer. But women will be preserved through childbirth—if they continue in faith, love, and sanctity, with moderation (NASB).
- For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control (ESV).
- For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. But women will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety (NIV).

Some believe 1 Timothy 2:11–15 is entirely descriptive (as discussed previously), while others believe a shift occurs when Paul relates a command to the creation order; the shift from descriptive (telling about the rebuke of these women in the local church) to prescriptive (giving instructions, telling what Christians should continue to do). Individuals today still debate whether the shift takes place or not. Some scholars identify male leadership in the church as supported by the creation order (Gundry & Meadors, 2009), “For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve” (verse 13). According to Gundry and Meadors (2009), “Women should learn the faith and share their knowledge in some settings, as Paul says in Titus 2:4. But they should not become primary public instructors and defenders of the faith in the local church’s

pastoral positions, as Paul envisioned them in his instruction to Timothy” (p. 112). Many scholars and practitioners believe women leaders are present throughout the Bible, but not women as the primary instructors or senior leaders in the church. Some would argue that Deborah fulfilled this senior leadership role in a civil and spiritual leadership capacity (Davis, 2009). Egalitarianism and Complementarianism are the two primary opposing viewpoints on this topic. Egalitarians believe women can be leaders at all levels, and they believe in equal leadership in family life as well (Cole, 2019). Complementarians believe that women should not lead in pastoral roles within the church, though most agree that leadership in a small group, or departmental lane such as women’s ministry and children’s ministry, is acceptable (Cole, 2019). There are levels of both these camps that vary slightly. There is a growing camp within the crossover between these two belief systems. These individuals typically believe that the husband is the leader in the household, but women can be a pastor and have nearly the same roles as men, but the highest leadership roles within the church are for men (Cole, 2019). Some also vary in this camp, specifically on church governmental leadership for women (senior pastors or elders).

This split between the crossover view is also the one seen here on whether or not 1 Timothy 2:11–15 is entirely descriptive. As stated previously, when looking at Scripture that is unclear, it is critical to let Scripture interpret Scripture. Therefore, the following will bring in additional Scriptures to examine this disagreement. Both approaches have points from qualified researchers to strengthen their argument.

These tables overview typical interpretations of other Scriptures that affect the meaning of one aspect of this verse and the reasoning behind the creation narrative. Currently, there are still several areas that both theological camps can agree. However, while comparing versions of the Bible within these Scriptures and taking into account other areas in Scripture, one argument appears stronger than the other, and that argument is with Table 2.2. One of the stronger arguments within Table 2.1 lies with Deborah. However, one must be careful to take one aspect of Deborah’s life and apply it to all women, for all time, and all contexts. We can learn from Deborah and her leadership and how God called her to leadership. However, one may want to reevaluate if a belief is based strongly on a judge from the Old Testament with no obvious commands or examples in the New Testament.

**Table 2.1** Support-church governmental positions for women**1 Timothy 2:11–15 Passage Entirely Descriptive—Other Passages and Interpretations in Support of Church Governmental Positions for Women**

Deborah fulfilled this senior leadership role in a civil and spiritual capacity. Judges that led Israel then led in both capacities (Davis, 2009).

Believes Junia in Romans 16:7 is a woman and an apostle. They interpret the Scripture on Junia as “prominent among the apostles,” as used in the NIV version (Hamilton, 2022; Ng, 2020)

It was prevalent in Bible times for men to have more than one wife (Riggleman, 2020), and polyandry was not allowed, and due to these facts, 1 Timothy 3:2 is not clear if this disqualifies single men and women from these roles (Knight, 1992)

In 1 Timothy 3:11, according to Lafosse (2013), there is good evidence that the women referenced in this verse are referring to female deacons, compared to wives. The NIV notes that this is a possible translation

A possible chiasm in 1 Timothy 4:6–5:22 would make the often translated older women to older women presbyters or elders. The NRSV version notes this possible translation (Bailey, 2000)

**Table 2.2** Opposition-church governmental positions for women**1 Timothy 2:11–15 Shift Takes Place at Creation Narrative—Other Passages and Interpretations in Opposition of Church Governmental Positions for Women**

Deborah was a prophetess and judge; she made executive decisions but did not preach or teach and therefore did not hold spiritual authority such as governmental roles within the Church (Gupta, n.d.).

Many from this position interpret Junia in Romans 16:7 as a woman “well known to the apostles,” as translated by the ESV (Hamilton, 2022)

Women are assigned different roles, but this does not make them inferior or less than men. Additionally, men are assigned the role of the elder while being “a husband of one wife.” In 1 Timothy 3:2, this phrase could not apply to women in the reverse role (a wife of one husband), and therefore this supports that elders and those in governmental roles in the Church must be married men (Butt, 2012)

In 1 Timothy 3:11, according to Knight (1992), due to the order of the qualifications listed, this would be a continuation of qualifications for the wife

Supports the meaning of 1 Timothy 4:6–5:22 from most translations, which does not support a translation for older women deacons or elders in this passage

At the same time, other important questions arise even within the belief system of Table 2.2. For example, can a woman be a church’s lead pastor if she is under the authority of another governing church or pastor? It is common to have a woman house church leader in other countries, but does this apply in the Western world within local churches? A deep

analysis of whether or not women can have the highest level of governmental authority within the church is beyond the scope of this book. The purpose of this book is not to settle this argument; but rather to empower women in areas of leadership that can be clearly established as appropriate. Regardless of whether or not a woman can be the most senior leader within the local church, a case can be made from Scripture that women can hold pastoral positions, have a level of authority over men, and lead in and outside the church. It is evident in the Bible that women led and had authority over men and women (Acts 12:12; 16:14–15; 18:24–26; 21:9; Rom. 16:1–3; Col. 4:15; Phil 4:2–3). Several of these women will be studied in the later chapters of this book. The following analysis will continue focusing on verses 14–15, where both camps from the previous tables can typically agree on this passage in 1 Timothy.

In verses 14 through 15, Paul focuses on the transgression of Eve. However, other instances in the Bible focus on Adam's sin compared to Eve's. Romans 5:12–14 (NASB) says, "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned— for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come." They both transgressed, but it does not mean a man or a woman is more susceptible than the other to be deceived (Witherington, 2006).

Moreover, 1 Timothy 2:15 is interesting because the Bible clearly articulates salvation through faith, not through works. Many Scriptures throughout the New Testament describe salvation through faith; one of those Scriptures include Ephesians 2:8, which says (NASB), "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." Therefore, women do not earn their salvation through bearing children, but through Mary, others can receive their salvation through her childbirth, through the birth of Christ (Witherington, 2010). A definite article is located directly in front of the word childbearing in this passage; also, the verb used in this passage is singular ("she will be saved") (Witherington, 2010, p. 230). More importantly, this would be a significant salvific issue if this meant women receive their salvation through childbearing, compared to being saved through the Child that was born through Mary. Witherington (2010, p. 230) continues as he discusses this passage in Scripture, "In other words, the curse on woman incurred in Eve is reversed through Mary. Human fallenness came through a

woman, and so did human salvation. This was the view of many of the church fathers about this verse, not least because they recognized that the Pastorals elsewhere had strongly insisted that salvation was by grace through faith, not by producing offspring while maintaining a highly moral lifestyle!”

From this narrative on Eve, some scholars translate this as women should not be allowed to speak publicly because they are more susceptible to deceit. According to Payne (1981), Moo (a scholar who took this stance) makes generalizations on questionable assumptions. Moo (1980) interpreted the Eve narrative (in verses 13–15) as the support needed to validate the commands in verses 11–12 for all time. Payne (1981) directly addresses this view in writing (p. 177).

Moo has not mentioned, however, the much more simple interpretation which takes Eve as an historical example of what can happen when women are deceived and warning lest deception of women in the Ephesian church lead to their fall. This view does justice to the stress on Eve’s deception and the seriousness of its lasting effects (certainly the fall is a serious enough lasting effect without postulating that it made women particularly susceptible to deception and made them by nature unsuited to some activities such as engaging in public teaching!). This view also supports the restrictions Paul has laid on women in the Ephesian church in 1 Tim. 2:11–12, but it avoids the dangerous extrapolation from historical example to anthropological norms which are not explicit in Scripture.

Paul uses the story of Eve and her deception as a typology; in the same way Satan deceived Eve, false teachers will also seek to deceive the women in the Church (Huizing, 2011). The women in the church were not acting as they should, and thus, Paul is warning them not to fall away and not to teach at this time. In this context, Paul is not allowing them to teach or have authority (Huizing, 2011). It is evident through the words used in the original language and the context in which Paul is speaking that this command was only for a specific time. It is critical to be aware that identifying the creation narrative as a validation of this as a continual command causes significant issues. This stance would point to women as more susceptible to deceit and, more importantly, a “contradiction within the canon” (Davis, 2009, p. 8). Women in Scripture taught and had authority over men; if Paul is saying that women can never do this, here lies the contradiction.